

Essential Exercises for Leesburg Seniors

At FirstLight HomeCare of Northwest VA, we know how important physical activity is for seniors. A regular exercise routine can help to boost your energy, relieve stress and manage symptoms of illness and pain. Being inactive can be extremely risky, making it hard to do even the simplest task. Your exercise doesn't have to be a hassle—you don't need to join a gym or buy any special equipment, everything you need to exercise can be found around the house.

At FirstLight HomeCare of Northwest VA, we suggest seniors should focus on four main areas of exercise to stay healthy:

1. **Cardio and Endurance**

For seniors, the best cardio and endurance exercises are swimming, walking and cycling. These activities are relatively low-impact, but still provide the opportunity to get your heart rate up, making your heart stronger and decreasing your risk of heart disease. If you would like access to exercise machines, look in to senior fitness centers in your community.

2. **Strength and Resistance**

There's no need for seniors to go out and buy weights to work on their strength. Just use household items like a gallon of milk (about 10 lbs.), a large bottle of water (about 2 lbs.) or even a bag of dry beans (about 1 lb.). It's not about lifting heavy weights—it's about keeping your joints moving!

3. **Stretching and Flexibility**

Seniors should make it a point to stretch before and after any sort of physical activity. Not only does it relieve muscle tension, but it also helps to eliminate the possibility of developing muscle cramps. Stretching can also be done with household items, like a towel. Using a towel to stretch allows you to get a full stretch without causing discomfort. Your stretch should consist of nice, easy movements.

4. **Balance**

Each year, approximately 2.3 million older Americans fall. Some great exercises to prevent your risk of falling include standing on one foot, walking heel to toe and leg raises. Also, strengthening your core will help you to maintain your balance.

One of the easiest times to exercise is while you are watching TV. Exercise during the commercials in your favorite show. This allows you to catch your breath between exercises and makes exercising fun!

Remember, it is important to listen to your body while exercising. If you begin to feel any discomfort, stop exercising. Don't push it. Before starting any type of exercise routine, seniors should consult with their doctor.

At FirstLight HomeCare of Northwest VA, our Leesburg caregivers are all about keeping seniors healthy & independent!

