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## FUN WAYS TO GET YOUR STRONG ON

Easy exercises you can do at home

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**S**trength training is a great way to increase muscle strength and improve your overall health. Stretching keeps you limber, aerobics improve heart and lung function, and balance exercises keep you on your feet. Strength training balances muscle mass and fat mass levels, as well as helps your body use oxygen more efficiently.

Strength-building exercises help more than just your muscles. They can strengthen your bones, making them less prone to breaks. Strength training also boosts mental function by increasing blood flow to the brain, making it easier to understand and remember what you learned in class. In addition, it can lift your mood and improve self-esteem, helping with mental health issues including anxiety and depression.

Here are several common equipment-free exercises to get you started. Try these two or three times a week with a day of rest in between. And remember: It's a good idea to talk with your doctor before starting any new workout routines.



### Push-ups

Push-ups help build muscle in your chest, arms and core. Lie stomach-down on the floor, and set your hands slightly wider than shoulder width apart. Rise on your arms and the balls of your feet, keeping your head, spine, hips and heels in a straight line. Then bend your elbows until they're at a 90-degree angle. Make sure they don't stick out! Keeping your body straight, slowly push back up. Start with three sets of 10 repetitions, increasing sets as you become stronger.

### Wall sits

Wall sits are great for your legs and abs. Stand with your back pressed against a wall, letting it support your weight. Your head, spine and hips should also align. Place your feet a short distance from the wall, keeping them shoulder width apart. Then slide down the wall as though you're sitting in an imaginary chair. Your knees should form a 90-degree angle. Use your core and legs to hold the position for one minute.

### Wall jumps

Wall jumps are another good way to work your legs and provide a cardio workout, too. Face the wall, standing less than a foot away from it. With your feet set shoulder width apart, stretch your arms high above your head. Find a spot on the wall several inches above where you are able to reach, and then jump to touch it. Do as many high, fast jumps as you can in 30 seconds.

### WALL SITS



### Arm circles

Arm circles are a simple but effective way to strengthen your upper arms. Stand up straight, with your feet shoulder width apart and your arms extended. Your form should resemble the letter T. With your elbows straight and your palms facing the floor, circle your arms 10 times in one direction and 10 times in the other. Make sure your circles aren't too big; your fingers shouldn't reach far above your head or below your hips. When you're done, take a break, then repeat two more times, adding more repetitions as you become stronger.

### ARM CIRCLES



### WALL JUMPS



### The inchworm

The inchworm is a fun, total body workout. Start by standing straight, with your feet close together. Reach to touch your toes and place your hands palms-down on the floor near your feet in front of you. Keeping your legs straight, walk forward on your hands until you reach a push-up position. Now, take baby steps forward, walking your feet toward your hands. Repeat these steps three times. *B*

### THE INCHWORM



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