



GUIDE TO  
EXERCISE

- STANDING • SITTING • FLOOR
- SELF-MASSAGE

## DID YOU KNOW?

- Most muscle and joint pain does not happen as a result of lifting one box wrong, or from one bad night's sleep.

Pain, stiffness and weak muscles often happen from extended habits of bad posture and poor body mechanics... how you sit, stand and move. Shallow breathing, loss of flexibility (or stiffness), heavy toxic foods, and a general decline of physical health all contribute to an imbalance in your neuromuscular systems.

When a combination of these bad habits causes strain on one part of your body, another area tries to compensate, so your physical problems are compounded.

- ***Regular use of Gentle Fitness movements and stretches will give you added flexibility and strength. Also endorphins, nature's feel-good hormone, will help you feel better and give you energy.***

For heart health, you should include in your schedule an aerobic program using your arms and/or legs; like walking, swimming, treadmill or stationary bike. With the guidance of your doctor, find an aerobic activity that you can do for 10 minutes ***or more***, several times a week.

- Remember no matter what age you begin, or how long or for what purpose you have been inactive, exercise that is based on safe and effective movements can improve your physical, psychological, and emotional health. ***Yes!***

## YOUR BASIC FITNESS AREAS...

### FLEXIBILITY

The ease of moving and bending.

### STRENGTH / ENDURANCE

The ability of muscles to do and maintain work.

### RESPIRATORY

Lungs ... Their ability to deliver oxygen and nutrients, and to remove wastes.

### CARDIOVASCULAR

Heart and blood circulation ... Ability to deliver oxygen and nutrients, and to remove wastes.

### BODY MOVEMENT

The quality of movement ... such as balance, coordination, reaction time.

### BODY COMPOSITION

The relationship of fat to muscle and bone.

### LYMPHATIC SYSTEM

Vital to the immune system, helps to protect from cancer, fungi, bacteria and illness.

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Your self-confidence and your relationships with other people can be comprised if you are weak in any of the basic fitness areas. You can make a difference. Act now on your breathing, eating and movement patterns. (And then start again tomorrow, and the next day, and the next!)

*Gentle Fitness* is a great way to help you feel like taking care of yourself! It can help contend with ...

- Stiff Movements • Pressure Sores
- Sluggish Digestion • Poor Posture
- Boredom and Depression
- Poor Eating Habits

### IN GENTLE FITNESS...

1. MOVEMENTS ARE GIVEN POWER AND CONTROL BY USING PURSED LIP BREATHING. Breathe in through your nose, and exhale out through a circle (or pucker) in your lips.
2. STRETCHES ARE SUPPORTED AND EXTENDED. Add a breath or two as you ease into stretches.
3. SHOES ARE REMOVED DURING THE EXERCISES. This allows maximum strength work in the muscles of your feet, ankle and lower legs, muscles that are important for good balance, and coordination.
4. EXERCISES MOVE WITH EASE FROM ONE BODY AREA TO ANOTHER. To prevent over-tiring muscle groups, there is variety to the movements and stretches in *Gentle Fitness*.
5. FEET ARE FLAT ON THE FLOOR AND LEGS ARE APART Flat feet provide a solid base from which to work and support your lower back. Keep your legs and feet apart for good balance.
6. UPPER BODY STRENGTH IS USED TO SUPPORT THE MOVES THAT AFFECT YOUR LOWER BACK. When movements affect the lumbar area, put a hand on your knee so your arm and upper body strength can add support to your back muscles during those movements.
7. ONE HAND OFTEN HOLDS THE BACK OF THE CHAIR. Do it. This helps lengthen chest and shoulder muscles to combat rounded shoulders.
8. "USE IT AND HOLD IT." Before stretching, your joints and muscles are "warmed up" first with fun movements.

### INJURY PREVENTION AND WELL-BEING...

1. PROMOTE STRENGTH AND FLEXIBILITY. *Gentle Fitness* works major joints and muscle groups, including the spine and back.
2. ENHANCE GOOD BALANCE, REACTION TIME, AND COORDINATION. *Gentle Fitness* stimulates the nerve impulses, or proprioceptors, that help "practice" keeping balance, reaction time and coordination.
3. IMPROVE YOUR MENTAL ALERTNESS. Stimulate blood circulation, and your lymphatic system, so that nutrients can flow and cleansing takes place.
4. EASE FEARS ABOUT HOW TO GET UP FROM CHAIRS, SOFT FURNITURE, CARS AND FLOORS. While there are no perfect answers, practiced skills from *Gentle Fitness* can prevent the terror of not knowing what to do to help oneself in these awkward situations.
5. ADD STRENGTH AND SUPPLENESS TO YOUR RIB CAGE TO FIGHT RESPIRATORY DISEASE OR INFECTION. Muscles that surround the thoracic area can become flaccid (weak) and other tissues become thick and stubborn from inactivity. That threatens the breathing capacity (exchange of fresh air and tiring wastes).
6. RELIEVE SHORTNESS OF BREATH, AND HAVE MORE ENERGY. Pursed-lip breathing is demonstrated and used in *Gentle Fitness*. Practice this simple technique, it will soon be natural and easy.

#### Purse-lip breathing ...

Releases trapped air in your lungs.

Makes each breath count.

Slows your breathing.

Calms your mind and body.

## TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS...

### FOR THE BEST TV PICTURE:

Dust your TV screen frequently.  
Adjust the color and brightness controls.

### BEFORE YOU EXERCISE:

Clear your sinuses.

Empty your bladder.

Close your eyes and treat your face to a warm, moist washcloth followed by a drop of moisturizer

Brush and stimulate your scalp with a soft, natural brush.

Put on loose and comfortable clothing.

Do *Gentle Fitness* at least 10 feet away from the TV

Give your arms and legs lots of room for a easy range of motion ... more room than you think you need.

Place yourself squarely in front of the TV.

If your TV has Closed Caption capability, use it the first few times you follow your video ... even if you hear just fine.

### IF YOU HAVE WEAK OR PARALYZED LIMBS:

Do what you can by yourself, or a friend can help guide, support or move your arms or legs while you do the rest.

## FOR THE BEST WORKOUT...

*Gentle Fitness* has six short routines. Use the parts you like best!

- Start with Level 1 (18 min) or Self-massage (8 min) to loosen up your neck, shoulders and back. Then, if you want to jump right into another part, like Level IV (7 min) you can have some fun and feel invigorated!
- Strive for a neutral spine. Don't slouch forward, or sit so tall that your back is arched.
- When you breathe in, make a tall back (spine) and open your abdomen and chest. Bring your shoulders and chin up and back. Control your outgoing air through pursed lips.
- After doing *Gentle Fitness* a time or two, be sure that you look away from the TV when you are told to do so. (example)  
"Turn and exhale over your shoulders."  
"Blow air out onto your toes."  
"Follow your finger with eyes."
- Trust yourself to listen to the cues and look away (or close your eyes). Enjoy the peaceful and wonderful stretches to your muscles.
- Yawning is a gift from nature. It is a natural way to get oxygen to your brain. It eases muscle tension, and helps you to relax. Yawn often in *Gentle Fitness*.



Where there is movement ... enjoyable, feel good, safe  
movement ... *people really do feel better.*



  
*Gentle*  
**FITNESS**