



## Fitness as we age

Keeping fit when older is important and takes more effort the older we get. Fifty percent of those over 75 are sedentary (sit most of the time) and 25% of those over 85 aren't active at all. Habitual activity makes up a large part of all activity. Housework makes up more than half of an older woman's activity.

As we get older, fitness is more important than *weight*, so relax about your shape and concentrate on fitness.

### So how fit are you?

#### What walking distances can you comfortably do?

- walk across the road
- walk around the house
- walk in your garden
- walk in the street – one block
- walk in the street – two blocks
- walk more than four blocks

Being **unable** to walk round the block is one indicator you have an increased risk of falling.

#### Test your fitness with the “Get up and go test” – using a dining chair.

Record how long it takes you to stand; walk three metres (10 feet); turn; walk back; sit down again.

After a month of exercising, test yourself again. A change more than four seconds can indicate a change in the level of mobility eg six seconds *slower* indicates slower/less confident mobility or six seconds *faster* indicates stronger/more confident mobility.

Below are some moderate intensity **realistic** exercise ideas for you to improve your fitness:

- a **brisk** walk
- an exercise class eg our Arthritis exercise class!
- treading water in a pool with moderate effort
- an active game with grandchildren
- sweeping, vacuuming, mopping floors
- washing the car – with gusto!
- gardening - mowing, raking and digging
- washing the dog!!
- parking further away from the shops and appointments and walk
- using a walk as a social occasion.
- walking to visit friends rather than driving.
- biking – it's often quicker than a car!
- putting your phone and remotes a little distance away from your chair so you have to get up

