

## Exercise - Frequently Asked Questions

### **What type of exercise is most beneficial for muscle and bone health?**

Regular exercise is vital for our overall health during all phases of life, including the older years. Regular weight-bearing (impact) exercise and resistance (strength) training can improve your bone density, muscle mass, muscle strength, posture and decrease your body fat and reduce your risk of falling in older age, as well as your risks for developing various chronic diseases.



Exercises that challenge your balance in a safe environment have been shown to reduce the risk of falls in older age. With this balance training it is important that the exercises are challenging for you to perform, i.e. that they place you on the edge of your balance ability. This ensures that you are exercising as intensely as is required to improve your balance. That being said, you must feel comfortable performing the exercise – if you are uncertain about a particular exercise, it is important to talk to your exercise practitioner as they may need to modify it.

When exercising at home it is extremely important to find a safe space to exercise, clear of any clutter/obstacles and unstable surfaces (e.g. slippery mats). If you feel unsteady on your feet, you should make sure that you are close to a wall or bed when performing the balance exercises so that you may catch yourself if you lose balance.

### **Will I be completing the training on my own or in a group?**

You will be completing the program in your own time at home (unless you decide to do it at a local leisure centre at your own cost), though you may wish to team up with some fellow participants and exercise together - covid restrictions permitting - even though they may be following a slightly different program to you.

Throughout the study we will be running regular online coffee catch ups via Zoom, which will provide an opportunity for you to meet and interact with fellow participants and the research staff. We hope that introducing a social aspect will make the program even more enjoyable and enable you to motivate and encourage each other, especially when you are challenged, for example, by bad weather.



## **How long will each exercise session take?**

We have designed the TeleFFIT training program to be flexible, so you can choose whether to complete 3 x ~30 minute sessions each week, or whether you would prefer to split the 30 minute sessions into 2 x ~15 minute 'exercise snacks' throughout the day. Choose what best fits into your lifestyle!

The daily stepping/weight-bearing activities should be incorporated into the daily activities that you normally do, so they should not take up any more of your time.



## **What happens if I miss a training session?**

If you miss a training session for any reason you should try to make up for it on an alternative day. This may mean training on two consecutive days, which is not ideal but preferable to missing the session altogether. If you are unable to make up the session, it is important that you let your exercise practitioner know and inform them of any adverse events that kept you from exercising to your full potential on any given day (if this was the reason).

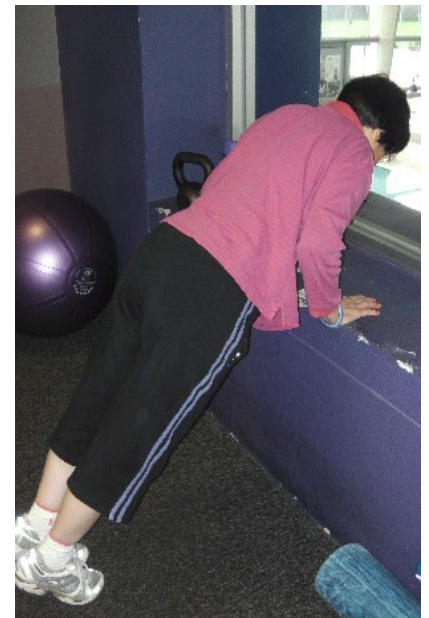


## **What should I wear to exercise?**

It is important that you wear appropriate clothing and footwear that you feel comfortable in. Don't wear anything too restrictive. We recommend that you wear shorts, tracksuit pants or leggings, a T-shirt and running shoes. We advise women to wear a supportive bra.

We also suggest that you keep a small hand towel and a drink bottle handy to ensure you remain well-hydrated – you lose about 1.5L of fluid for every hour of exercise so make sure you drink water before, during and after a training session.

It is important that you avoid eating a large meal before training and that you drink plenty of fluids afterwards. You will quickly warm up once you start exercising, even if it is very cold outside!





## **What happens if I've not done much exercise before?**

Don't worry; your exercise program will be tailored to your ability. You will not be asked to perform exercises that you do not feel comfortable doing. TeleFFIT is designed as a progressive program, the speed of which is determined by your own capabilities. The program is designed to be challenging, but safe. Your EP will be monitoring you throughout the program and will advise you when you are ready to progress to the next level. He/she will be on-hand to help you if you need reminding about to use a piece of equipment, or how to use the exercise training app. The TeleFFIT program is not a competition, and it makes no difference if you have never participated in structured exercise before. Hopefully, taking part in this program will be an enjoyable experience for you and one that you wish to continue after the study is over.



## **Should I be doing any other exercise in addition to the TeleFFIT program?**

In addition to the TeleFFIT exercise program, starting in Week 17, we encourage you to perform one to two aerobic type activities per week that are designed to increase your fitness. These include activities such as walking, cycling or swimming. Aim for 15 to 30 minutes or more of aerobic activity at a time, starting slowly and progressing over time.

We also encourage you to be mindful of how much time you spend sitting each day and aim to lower your sedentary time over time. This could be done through replacing sedentary time with standing activities or exercise, or changing your posture such as standing at your desk or using an exercise bike while watching TV.



## **What happens if I go away or get sick and can't exercise?**

If you are planning to go away it is still important that you try your best to continue to participate in the TeleFFIT program, and complete any study questionnaires that we email you. If you are planning to go away for an extended period, which means that you may be unavailable for one of the testing time points, please tell us in advance so we can make alternative arrangements. We encourage you to continue with your home exercise program while you are away so that any benefits are not lost. If you have been away or ill/injured and have not trained for approximately 1 month your exercises will need to be reviewed by your exercise practitioner prior to you beginning them again to ensure they are at the correct level for you – contact your EP to arrange a time to talk to them about your program. If you have been in hospital, check with your doctor if it is ok to re-start your exercise program.