

Sources of Information

This handout is based on the 2017 'Scientific Exercise Guidelines for Adults with Spinal Cord Injury' from Loughborough University & the University of British Columbia.

The full document can be found at the following online location:

<http://www.ncsem-em.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Spinal-cord-injury-guidelines.pdf>



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An tOspidéal Náisiúnta Athshlánúcháin

Strengthening Guidelines For Adults with SCI



**A guide to how much exercise
you need to do to become
stronger following
Spinal Cord Injury**

Strengthening Guidelines for Adults after Spinal Cord Injury

This information aims to help you understand how much exercise you need to get stronger following spinal cord injury. It highlights the **minimum amount** you need to do to keep getting stronger.

Strengthening exercises are ones that aim to stimulate your muscles to help you build muscle mass and strength.

To achieve the minimum amount of strengthening exercise recommended each week, you must:

- Perform strengthening exercises **at least twice a week** (for example, using weights, theraband or gym equipment)
- Exercise in **three sets of 8-10 repetitions** with rest of 1-2 minutes between each set (repetitions are the amount of times you repeat an exercise, sets are how many groups of repetitions you perform)



- Exercise at a high enough resistance (weight) that you can just about complete 8-10 repetitions in each set (that is, 60-80% of your 1 Repetition Maximum – the heaviest weight you can lift once).



Steps to Success

The follow-



ing are simple steps you can take to help you achieve your strengthening goals:

1. Pick an exercise or activity you enjoy. Strengthening exercises can include gym-based exercises with weights and home-based exercises (with or without weights or theraband, depending on your strength).
2. Pick the times and days of the week you will stand on. Exercise with someone else for additional motivation.
3. Make sure you perform the exercises with the current technique. **Quality is more important than quantity!**
4. Make sure you are exercising hard enough (just about able to complete three sets of 8-10 repetitions).
5. Use an exercise diary or book to record how often you have exercised and how you feel after exercising. This can help you plan ahead and progress your exercises as you get stronger!

If you have any questions about standing following spinal cord injury, please ask your physiotherapist at any time and they will happily discuss this with you and answer any questions you may have.