



Group Session Plan: Seated Movement

A 30-minute template for activity directors and life enrichment staff.

Date, time, room, leader and helper

Before the session

- ☐ Sturdy armless or armed chairs, no wheels, set against a wall or on a non-slip floor
- ☐ Space to extend arms to the sides without touching a neighbor
- ☐ Water available; room comfortably cool
- ☐ Participants cleared for exercise under your community's own policy
- ☐ Walkers parked and locked in front of chairs; wheelchairs with brakes on

Session outline (about 30 minutes)

- ☐ Welcome and check-in (3 min): how is everyone feeling today? Remind: move only in a comfortable range.
- ☐ Warm-up (5 min): three slow breaths, ankle circles, shoulder rolls.
- ☐ Main movement (15 min): 4 to 6 gentle seated movements, 5 to 8 slow repetitions each, offering an easier and a harder version.
- ☐ Cool-down (5 min): gentle seated twist, wrist and finger stretches, three slow breaths.
- ☐ Closing chat (2 min): one conversation prompt or a tip for the week.

Movements chosen for today

Stop and get help if anyone reports

Chest pain or pressure, severe shortness of breath, dizziness or feeling faint, new or sharp pain, or sudden confusion. Follow your community's emergency procedure.

Notes for next time



Leading a Seated Movement Group: Leader's Notes

For activity directors, life enrichment staff and volunteer leaders.

Before the first session

- Follow your community's policy on medical clearance, and encourage every participant to check with their own doctor.
- Ask each person privately about anything you should know: recent surgery, joint replacements, dizziness, vision or hearing needs.
- **Chairs:** sturdy, no wheels, on a non-slip floor. Walkers parked and locked in front of the chair; never sit on a rollator seat to exercise.
- Know your emergency procedure and where the nearest phone and first-aid kit are.

Cueing that works

- Face the group and mirror the movements (your right is their left), or sit beside them and move the same way.
- Speak slowly and clearly. Demonstrate first, then do it together.
- **Offer three versions of each movement:** gentle, steady and stronger. Let people choose, and praise every choice.
- **Cue breathing:** "Breathe in as the arms rise, out as they lower." Remind the group never to hold their breath.
- **Use a "talk test":** everyone should be able to speak comfortably while moving.

Keeping people coming back

- Same day, same time, same room. Routine builds attendance.
- Learn and use names. Welcome newcomers personally.
- End with two minutes of conversation. Many participants come as much for the company as the exercise.
- **Track attendance and note small wins:** "Mary stood up without using her hands today."



Stop and get help

- Stop the session for anyone who reports chest pain or pressure, severe shortness of breath, dizziness or fainting, new sharp pain, or sudden confusion or weakness. Follow your emergency procedure and call 911 when in doubt.

Formal evidence-based programs such as Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance, A Matter of Balance and EnhanceFitness offer leader training. See the National Council on Aging's program directory at ncoa.org.

Sources and more help: National Council on Aging evidence-based programs (ncoa.org); CDC Older Adult Fall Prevention (cdc.gov/falls); NCCAP (nccap.org). This template does not replace training or your organization's policies.