

# Useful exercises for ankylosing spondylitis

Exercises from the National Ankylosing Spondylitis Society (UK).

## Warm up

March vigorously on the spot for one minute with high stepping and arms punching upwards for 20 seconds, forwards for 20 seconds and sideways for 20 seconds.

Repeat each of the following exercises at least five times.

## Floor exercises

1. Lie on your back, both knees bent, feet on floor. Lift your hips off the floor as high as possible, hold for five seconds and lower slowly.



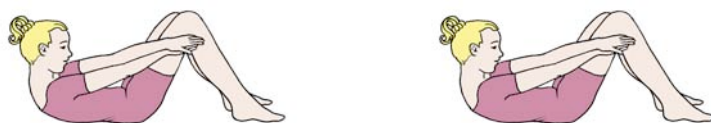
2. Lift your arms in front towards the ceiling, with fingers linked. Take your arms to the right as far as possible while taking your knees to the left as far as possible. Repeat to the opposite side.



3. Keeping your chin tucked in, reach both hands towards your knees, lifting your head and shoulders off the floor. Relax.



4. Keeping your chin tucked in, lift your head and shoulders off the floor, reaching both hands towards the outside of your right knee. Relax. Repeat to the opposite side.



**These exercises will help you manage your ankylosing spondylitis more easily. You may find them a little difficult at first, but it is worth investing some time in learning them properly. They should become part of your normal daily routine. Aim to do them once a day or, even better, twice. Also try to do at least one activity each day that makes you out of breath.**



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**Floor exercises continued**

- 5. Kneel on all fours. Keeping your elbows straight throughout, tuck your head between your arms and arch your back as high as possible. Lift your head and hollow your back as much as possible.



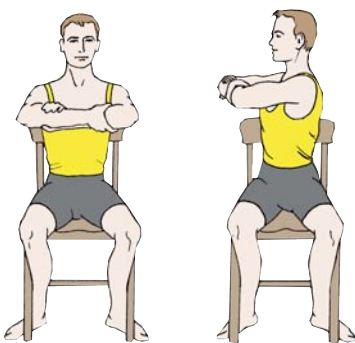
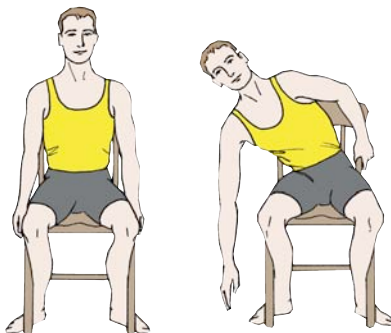
- 6. Keeping your head up, raise your right arm forwards as you raise your left leg backwards as high as possible. Hold for five seconds. Return to all fours and change to raising your left arm and right leg.



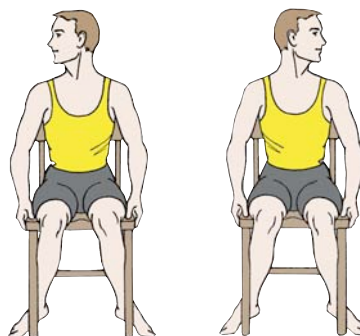
**Chair exercises**

Sit on a stable kitchen or dining room chair with your feet on the floor, hooked around the legs of the chair.

- 7. Place your hands by your sides. Hold the chair with your left hand. Bend sideways as far as possible without bending forwards, reaching your right hand towards the floor. Repeat to the opposite side.




- 8. With your hands clasped on your forearms at shoulder level, turn your upper body to the right as far as possible. Repeat to the opposite side.



- 9. Hold the sides of the chair seat. Turn your head to the right as far as possible without letting your shoulders turn. Repeat to the opposite side.

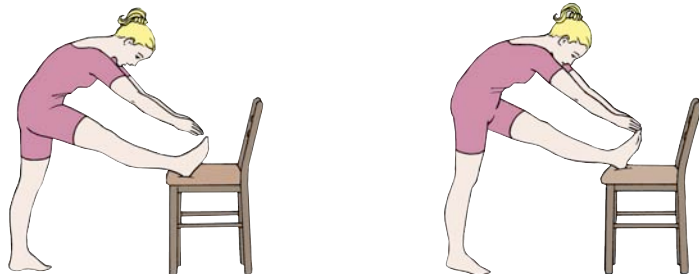
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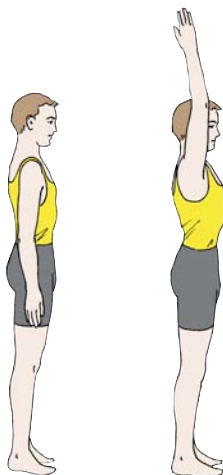
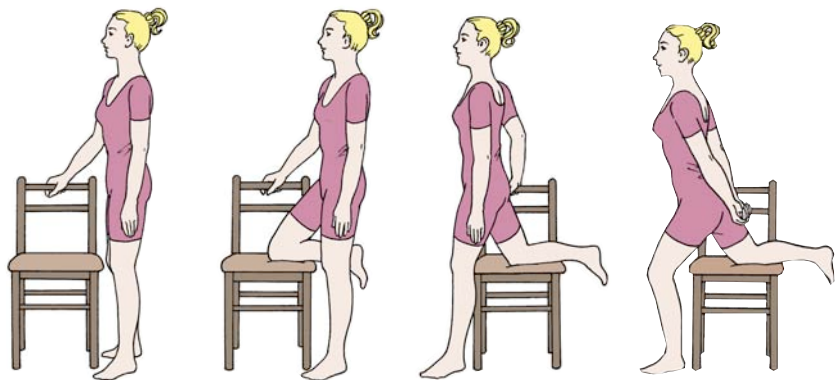
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**Stretches**

10. Stand facing a kitchen chair with a padded seat for comfort. Place your right heel on the seat, keeping the knee straight, and reach forwards as far as possible with both hands towards your foot. Hold for six seconds. Relax. Repeat twice, stretching a little further each time. Relax. Repeat with the opposite leg.



11. Face the side of the chair and hold the back with your right hand. Bend your right knee and place your right shin on the seat. Place your left foot forward as far as possible. Now place both hands behind your back. Bend your left knee as much as possible, keeping your head up and your back straight. Turn around to face the other side of the chair. Repeat with the opposite leg.



12. Stand with your back to the wall, shoulders and buttocks against the wall and heels as close to the wall as you can. Tuck your chin in and push the back of your head towards the wall. Keep your shoulders down.

Stretch up as tall as possible without lifting your heels. Hold this position. Raise your right arm forwards and upwards while keeping your elbow straight, your upper arm close to your ear and your thumb towards the wall. Lower and repeat with the opposite arm.

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