

# Exercise Activity Ideas for Someone with Dementia

We all know that taking part in regular exercise has a positive impact on not just our physical wellbeing but our mental wellbeing too. However, for someone who is living with dementia, the need for exercise based activities can often be overlooked in favour of other more cognitive focused activities. But it is incredibly important to encourage regular exercise for a number of reasons, including:

- Improving mood,
- Improving heart health which will reduce risk of high blood pressure and heart disease,
- Reducing the risk of stroke and type 2 diabetes,
- Improving physical fitness thus helping a person maintain their independence for longer,
- Improving sleep.

## Exercise Activity Ideas

### Gardening

Gardening is a great activity for someone with dementia, as it can be adapted to each individuals' ability and dementia stage, as well as encouraging them to spend time outside in the fresh air. The garden activities can range from sweeping leaves, to pruning to planting bulbs for the spring, and will help strengthen muscles and improve breathing.



## Seated Exercises

Seated exercises are a great way to encourage regular exercise sessions either at home using an exercise DVD or in a group with an instructor. Sitting means that the exercises are less strenuous than standing, but still focus on strengthening muscles and improving balance.

## Walking

A simple exercise to organise which can be adapted to suit all abilities, and can be enjoyed in the back garden or along a countryside path. There are organisations that aim to create more dementia friendly walks, as well as providing maps to find suitable walks for people living with dementia and their family, friends and carers.



## Dancing

Organising a tea dance can be a great way to encourage exercise that is fun and social. People can dance together, on their own or simply just sit down and enjoy dancing to the music seated. Dancing will help strengthen muscles, increase flexibility and balance as well as improve mood and reduce stress.