



LoriMichielFitness, Inc.
Senior Fitness in the Home

Since 2006



Fitting News

ISSUE #124

MAY 2025

You've probably heard the term "Functional Exercise", but what does it actually mean? For many it can sound vague or even a little confusing. Let's break it down and explore why it matters, especially when it comes to everyday activities involving strength, balance and living well.



What Does Functional Exercise Really Mean?

There were times I couldn't even put on my socks without using a device. And lifting my grandchildren or little niece - if I wasn't paying attention, I could hurt my back. As a seasoned fitness trainer for seniors, I recognized that, in those moments, my hips and back were likely too tight. Without performing the right *functional exercises*, those issues can linger.

I can't imagine having to give up wearing socks or being afraid to lift the little ones. What if I stopped going upstairs, avoided getting in and out of a car, or couldn't roll to one side in bed, let alone get up off the floor? I'd be stuck and very unhappy.

Understanding the power of functional exercise, when done correctly, can make all the difference.

A functional exercise imitates the same movements of your daily life—safely. This helps strengthen the muscles that you use regularly. For instance, if you feel unstable while standing or walking, you need to improve several key muscles to help keep your balance.

Beyond the most common exercises, there are other simple, yet effective, ways to help yourself or a loved one stay strong and steady on their feet. One key area to focus on is the ankle – an essential foundation for confident walking, balance and overall stability. Here are two examples to try:

1. Seated Ankle Flex

Sit comfortably in a chair and place a [stretch band](#) under one foot. While holding the ends of the band, gently point your toes downward, then pull them back up toward your shin. Repeat this movement 10 times, then switch feet.

2. Ankle Circles

With the band still under your foot, slowly rotate your ankle in a circular motion, first to the right, then to the left, without moving the rest of your leg. Keep the movement controlled and focused. Then switch feet and repeat the exercise. [READ MORE](#)



Lori Michiel, NASM-CPT, Senior Fitness Specialist

For more blogs, exercise snack videos or to subscribe to this newsletter, sign up at www.LoriMichielFitness.com or email me at hello@lorimichiefitness.com
818-620-1442

Disclaimer: Always consult your physician before beginning any exercise program. This general information is not intended to diagnose any medical condition or to replace your healthcare professional. If you experience any pain or difficulty with these exercises, stop and consult your healthcare provider.