

PHYSICAL CAPACITY TEST

Am I healthy enough to take the test?

As a support worker you will be required to participate in manual handling activities. A level of fitness is required to ensure your safety and the safety of others. The following exercises are designed to make sure that you have a degree of fitness and flexibility in order to undertake the duties of a support worker. The risk associated with exercise testing varies with a person's health status. During exercise testing, the overall risk in adults is low. To minimise this risk please answer the following questions honestly.

1. I have a heart condition and my health care professional recommends only medically supervised physical activity. **YES / NO**
2. During or right after exercises, I often have pains or pressure in my neck, left shoulder, or arm. **YES / NO**
3. I have developed chest pain within the last month. **YES / NO**
4. I tend to lose consciousness or fall over due to dizziness. **YES / NO**
5. I feel extremely breathless after mild exertion. **YES / NO**
6. My health care provider recommended that I take medicine for a heart condition **YES / NO**
7. I have bone or joint problems that limit my ability to do physical activity. **YES / NO**
8. I have a medical condition or other physical reason not mentioned here that stops me participating in an exercise program **YES / NO**
9. I am pregnant and my health care professional hasn't given me the OK to be physically active. **YES / NO**

If you have answered "Yes" to any of these questions seek medical advice before you continue.

IF YOU ARE FEELING PAIN, DISCOMFORT OR DIZZINESS DURING ANY OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES STOP AND TELL THE ASSESSOR

1. **STEP UPS** – Assess aerobic capacity



RATIONALE

Light-to-moderate activities that need to be performed for extended periods of time require support workers to have a sufficient aerobic capacity to prevent muscles tiring and being injured.

ACTIVITY

1. Step is to be positioned next to a wall to prevent movement
2. Step up onto step with left foot, followed by right foot, step down with left foot, followed by right foot. Repeat 10 times at a steady rate.
3. When finished step up onto step with right foot, followed by left foot, step down with right foot, followed by left foot. Repeat 10 times.
4. Stop

RESULTS

1. Slightly out of breath
2. Out of breath but can still talk
3. Out of breath and needs to catch breath before talking
4. Extremely out of breath
5. Unable to complete task

Score _____

2. WALL SQUAT – Assess strength of thigh muscles



RATIONALE

- Manual handling requires extensive use of thighs muscles
- Workers with poor thigh strength will often use their back and shoulders to complete a manual handling task
- At times the squat posture needs to be maintained while personal care tasks are completed. Therefore it is important the thighs can hold this position

ACTIVITY

- Stand with back against a wall
- Move your feet away from the wall
- Slide bottom down wall to an angle of approximately 30 degrees, making sure knees remain behind toes. Make sure you can see your toes
- Hold the position for as long as is comfortable.

RESULTS

1. Holds for 86 secs or more (very good)
2. Holds for 66 – 85 secs (good)
3. Holds for 51 – 65 secs (average)
4. Holds for 36 – 50 secs (fair)
5. Holds for 21 – 35 secs (poor)
6. Holds for less than 20 secs (very poor)

Score _____

3. LATERAL WEIGHT RAISE – Assess strength of shoulder muscles



RATIONALE

A mobile shoulder joint tends to be more susceptible to injury as it is not supported by the surrounding muscles. The shoulder joint relies heavily on the shoulder muscles for stability. Any problems with these muscles or other anatomical structures of the shoulder can cause pain, flexibility and stability problems resulting in injuries.

ACTIVITY

- Hold one 2kg weight in each hand with palms facing up
- With elbows slightly bent, raise your arms to lift the weight.
- Do not lift higher than your shoulder.
- Lower the weight
- Repeat the activity once

RESULTS

1. Able to lift weight with right and left arm with no pain or discomfort
2. Able to lift weight with either right or left arm with no pain or discomfort
3. Unable to lift weight with either arm

Score _____

5.KNEELING – Assess ability to get low to a task without bending at waist



RATIONALE

Many tasks performed by a support worker are located below the waist. An inability to get low to the task will result in a worker bending at the waist, increasing the chance of muscle strain of the back and hamstrings.

ACTIVITY

- Kneel on one knee on the floor. Either knee can be used
- Get up from the kneeling position
- A chair will be placed within easy reach to help if needed

RESULTS

1. Easily kneels and stands up with no discomfort
2. Easily kneels but has some difficulty getting up, needs to push on chair
3. **Has difficulty kneeling and getting up**
4. Unable to get into a kneeling position

Score _____

OVERALL RESULTS

ACTIVITY	SCORE
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
TOTAL	

Score between

- 1 (excellent) and 12 (average)
- 13 (average) to 17 (fair)
- greater than 17 you really need to improve you fitness.