

When your appetite drops, the weight you lose can include muscle. **Enough protein + simple resistance training** help you keep it.

Muscle keeps you strong for stairs, groceries, and grandkids; it supports balance, blood sugar, and how you feel as the scale moves. You don't need a gym or heavy weights — just a chair, a wall, and a backpack or a pair of light dumbbells.

Please read first

This handout is **general education only** and is **not a personal exercise prescription**. Check with your clinician before starting, especially if you have heart or lung disease, uncontrolled blood pressure, recent surgery, osteoporosis, joint problems, or are pregnant. **Stop and seek care** if you have **chest pain or pressure, severe shortness of breath, dizziness or feeling faint, or a joint injury** (sharp pain, swelling, or a pop). Call 911 for chest pain that doesn't go away with rest.

Your week at a glance

Mon Strength	Tue Walk	Wed Strength	Thu Walk	Fri Strength	Sat Walk / play	Sun Rest
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Any 3 non-consecutive days work. Each session is about 20–30 minutes.

Each session

1 Warm up

3–5 min easy walk (or march in place) + a few arm circles.

2 Strength

6–8 moves below. 2–3 sets of 8–12 reps. Rest 60–90 sec between sets.

3 Cool down

1–2 min slow walk and gentle stretches. Note how it felt.

The moves

Move	Bodyweight option	Light-dumbbell option	Form cue
Squat	Sit-to-stand from a sturdy chair; hands across chest	Goblet squat holding one dumbbell at chest	Push hips back, knees track over toes, stand tall
Hip hinge	Good-morning: hands on hips, hinge forward with a flat back	Romanian deadlift with light dumbbells	Soft knees, slide hands down thighs, feel the hamstrings
Push	Wall push-up → counter → floor (knees or toes)	Floor press: lie down, press dumbbells up	Body in one line; lower slowly
Row	Band row anchored in a door, or backpack row	One-arm dumbbell row, hand on a chair	Squeeze shoulder blade back; don't shrug
Overhead	Wall angels: back to wall, slide arms up and down	Seated or standing overhead press, light weights	Ribs down; stop below any shoulder pinch
Core	Dead bug on your back, or plank on a counter/knees	Plank on floor — work up to 20–30 sec	Breathe out; low back stays steady
Calves	Calf raises holding a counter for balance	Calf raises holding dumbbells at your sides	Rise slowly, pause, lower over 2–3 sec
Carry (optional)	Walk tall carrying full grocery bags	Farmer carry: dumbbells at sides, 20–30 steps	Shoulders back, steady steps

Pick the option that lets you finish 8 reps with good form and 1–3 reps “left in the tank.” Mild muscle effort is the goal — not joint pain.

How to progress — slow and steady

▶ Weeks 1–2	1–2 sets of each move. Learn the form. Leave sessions feeling like you could do more.
▶ Weeks 3–4	Build to 2–3 sets. Keep rests at 60–90 sec.
▶ When 12 feels easy	Add one rep next time, or a little load (heavier dumbbell, fuller backpack, harder push-up angle) and drop back to 8 reps.
▶ Off day or low energy	Do 1 set of everything, or just walk. Showing up counts.

Protein at every meal

A smaller appetite makes protein easy to miss. Start each meal with it.

- Aim for a **protein source at breakfast, lunch, and dinner** — eat it first, before you fill up.
- Easy picks: eggs, Greek yogurt or skyr, cottage cheese, fish, chicken, turkey, tofu, tempeh, beans, lentils.
- Low-appetite days: a protein shake, milk, or a yogurt cup can stand in for a meal.
- A protein snack after a session is a nice habit, not a must.
- Need a personal target (or have kidney disease)? **Ask us** — amounts depend on your body and health.

Recover well

Muscle is built between sessions, not during them.

- **Sleep:** protect a regular bedtime; most adults do best with 7+ hours.
- **Hydrate:** sip water through the day, more on workout days. GLP-1 meds can blunt thirst.
- **Rest days:** an easy walk is great; gentle stretching too.
- **Soreness:** mild achiness for a day or two is normal. Sharp or joint pain is not — stop that move.
- **Nausea or low fuel:** eat a little first, keep it light, and skip the session if you feel unwell.

4-week check-off

Tick each session. Jot the move you progressed or how you felt.

Week	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Walks	Notes (what got easier?)
1	☐	☐	☐	☐ ☐ ☐	
2	☐	☐	☐	☐ ☐ ☐	
3	☐	☐	☐	☐ ☐ ☐	
4	☐	☐	☐	☐ ☐ ☐	

Message us if...

- you feel dizzy, light-headed, or unusually weak — especially if you take blood pressure or diabetes medicines;
- you're losing weight quickly but feel your strength dropping;
- pain keeps you from a move, or you want a plan adapted for a joint, balance, or heart condition.

Stop right away if...

- chest pain or pressure (call 911 if it doesn't ease with rest);
- severe shortness of breath;
- dizziness or feeling faint;
- a joint injury — sharp pain, swelling, or a pop.

Small, steady, repeatable beats perfect. Three short sessions a week is a real win.

Questions about how this fits your medications or health? Message us through the portal or visit drzhealth.care.