

Aquatic Exercises: Lower Body Strengthening

These exercises will strengthen the muscles in your legs, hips, abdomen and buttocks. Exercising in water allows you to have less stress on your joints. When you exercise in water that comes up to your neck, your joints are only supporting about 10 percent of your body weight.

Do these exercises with your spine in a neutral position. Find this by standing with your feet about shoulder width apart. Stand with your knees slightly bent and your weight evenly distributed. Tighten your stomach muscles and you should feel balanced. Keep your stomach muscles tightened during all the exercises.

If you feel any of these **signs of fatigue**, stop exercising and tell the therapist or lifeguard you need help.

- Trouble catching your breath or feel short of breath
- Faint, lightheaded or dizzy
- Nausea
- Red face or feel flushed
- Pain or pressure in chest or upper body
- Weakness or suddenly feel tired
- Pounding heart or irregular heart beat
- Confusion or loss of sense of direction

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Strengthening Exercises

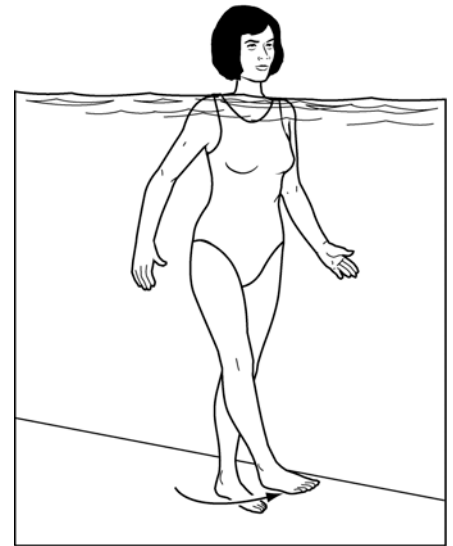
Be sure to breathe while you exercise. Never hold your breath when you exercise.

Stand in water about shoulder height, unless otherwise noted, or as directed by your therapist.

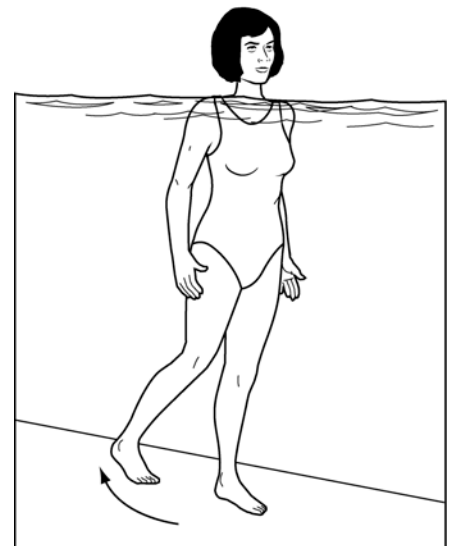
Start each exercise with feet together and knees straight, unless otherwise noted.

Do each exercise slowly with smooth movements and repeat _____ times.

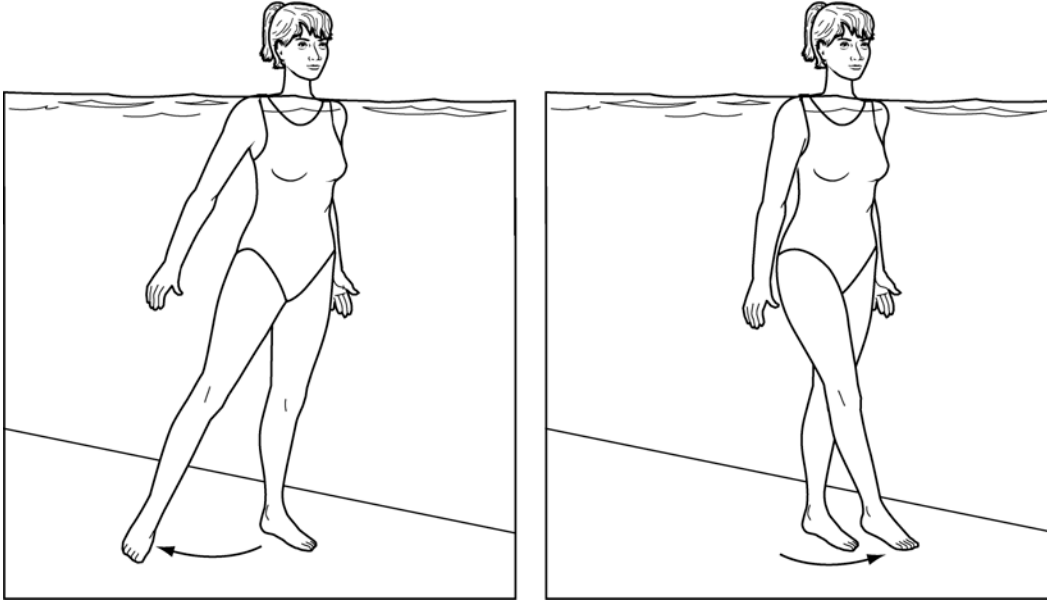
- 1. Move your right foot out in front of you, keeping your knee straight and toes up.
- 2. Hold and then return to starting position.
- 3. Repeat and then do the same exercise with the left foot.



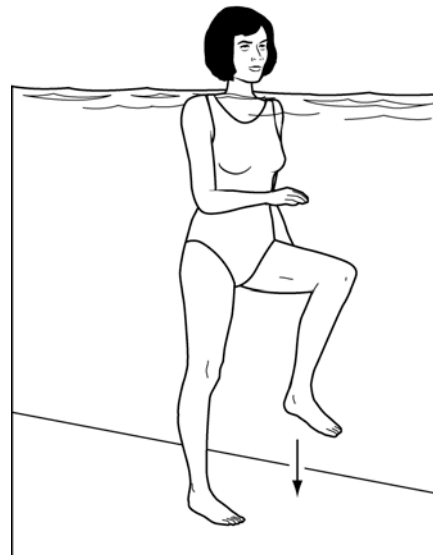
- 1. Move your right foot back, keeping your knee straight.
- 2. Hold and then return to the starting position.
- 3. Repeat and then do the same exercise with your left foot.



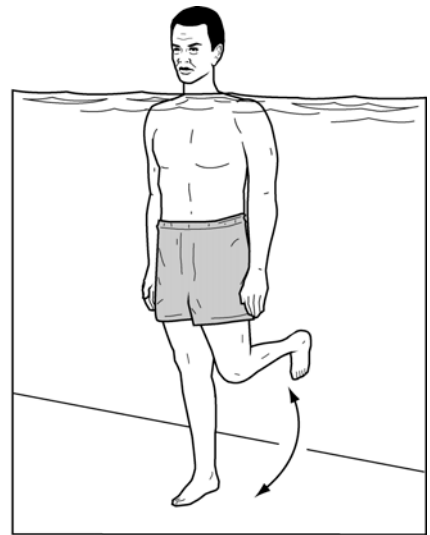
- ❑ 1. Move your right foot out to your side and hold.
- 2. Then pull your right foot across in front of the other leg and hold.
- 3. Repeat and then do the same exercise with the left leg.



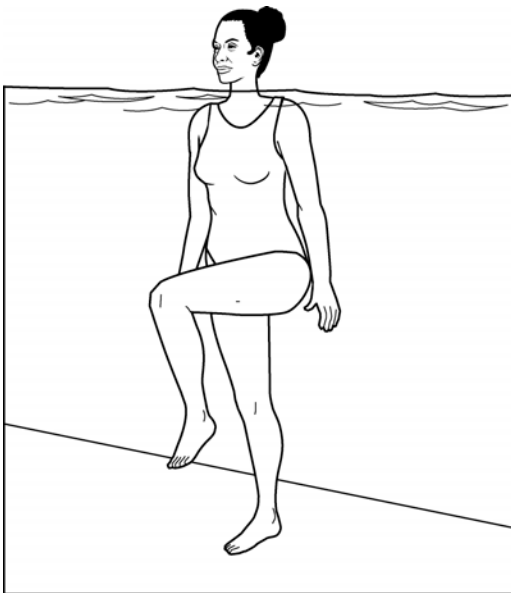
- ❑ March in place, lifting one foot and then the other.



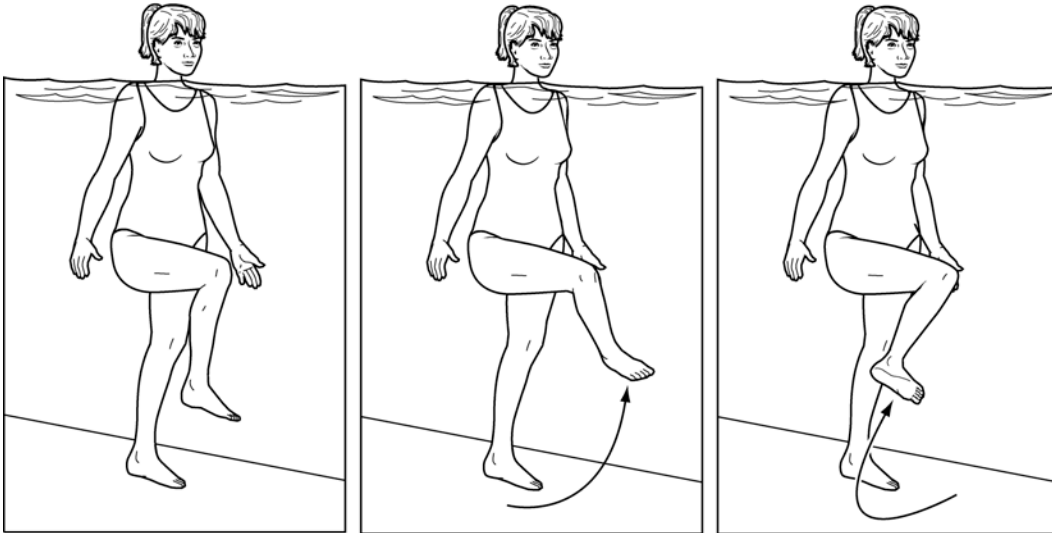
- ❑ 1. Bend your knee, bringing your foot up behind you.
- 2. Repeat with the other foot.



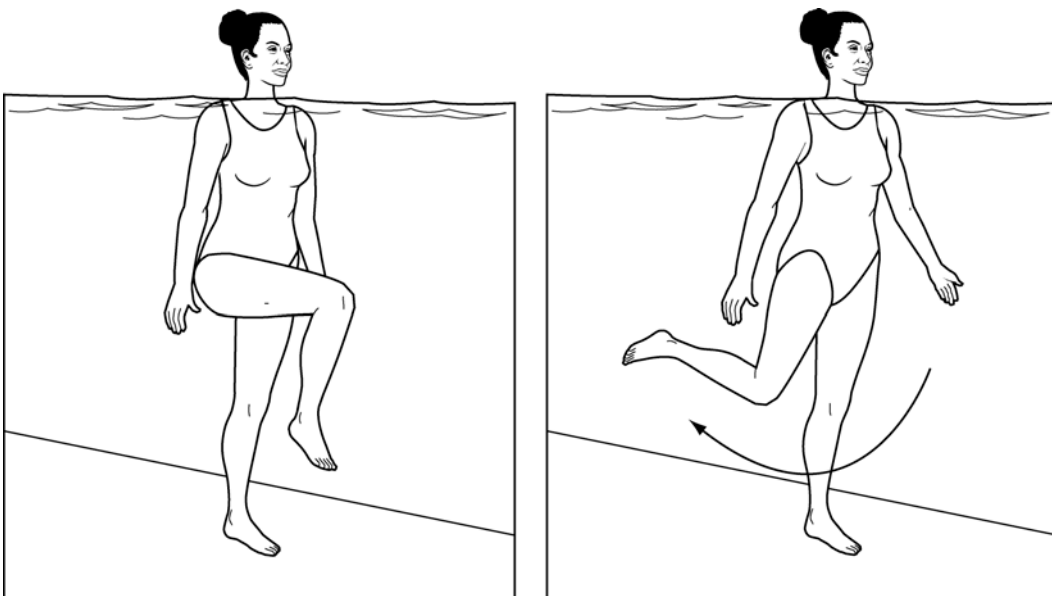
- ❑ 1. Pull one knee up in front of you and then extend the foot forward so your knee is straight.
- 2. Bend the knee back down and return to the starting position.
- 3. Repeat with the other leg.



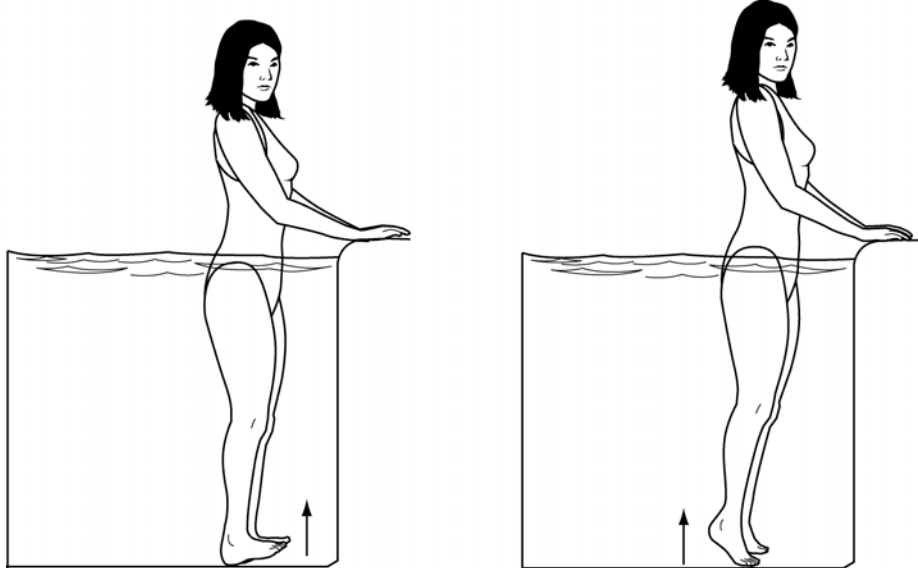
- ❑ 1. Pull one knee up bent at 90 degrees in front of your body.
- 2. Swing the foot across in front of your body.
- 3. Swing the foot out to the side of your body.
- 4. Repeat with the other foot.



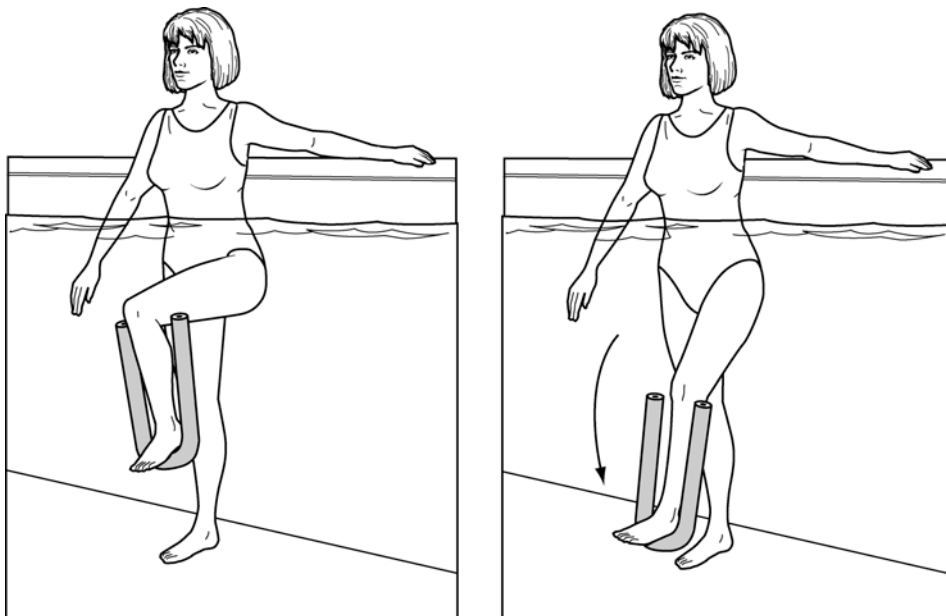
- ❑ 1. Pull one knee up bent at 90 degrees up in front of your body.
- 2. Keep the knee bent and push the leg back behind you.
- 3. Repeat with the other leg.



- ❑ 1. Hold onto the side of the pool.
- 2. Raise your toes up and hold.
- 3. Put your toes down and raise up your heels and hold.

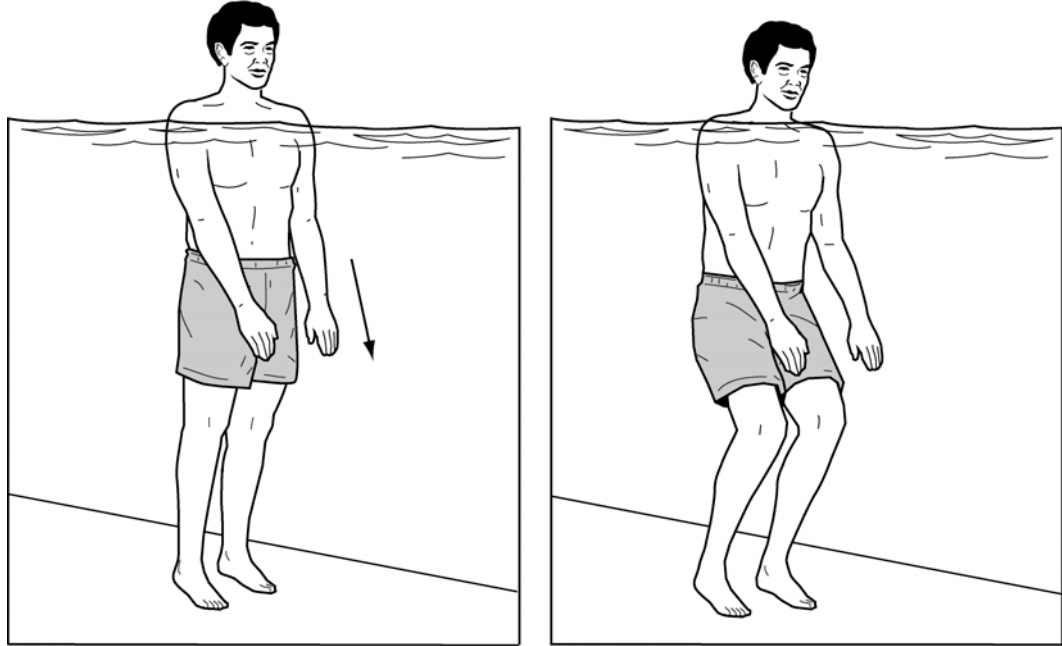


- ❑ You will need a flotation noodle for this exercise and you will need to hold the side of the pool.
- 1. Pull one knee up in front of you at 90 degrees and place the noodle under your foot.
- 2. Push the noodle down with your foot and hold, then bring it back up to 90 degrees.
- 3. Repeat with the other leg.

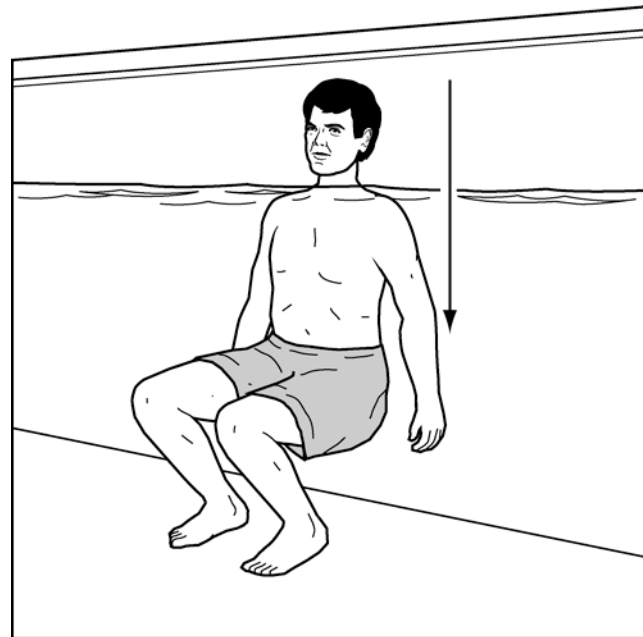


□ This exercise is done in waist to chest high water

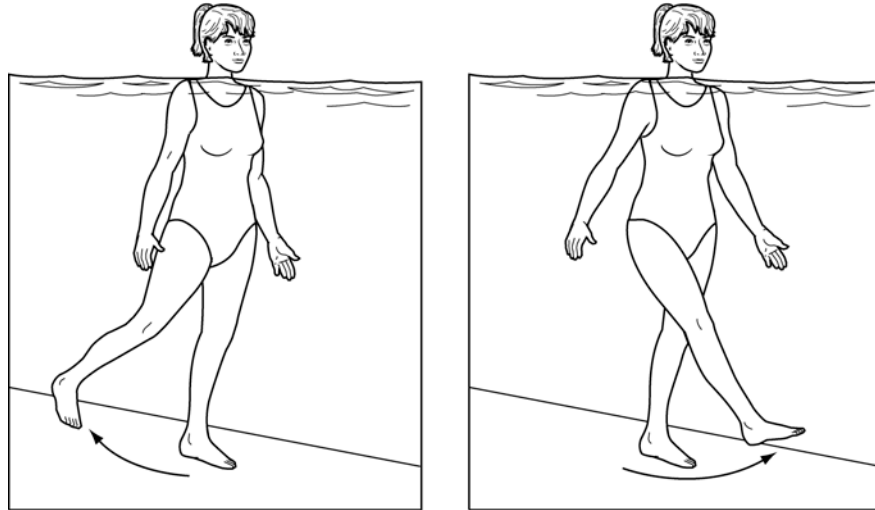
- ▶ Lift your arms straight out in front of your body while you bend your knees down.



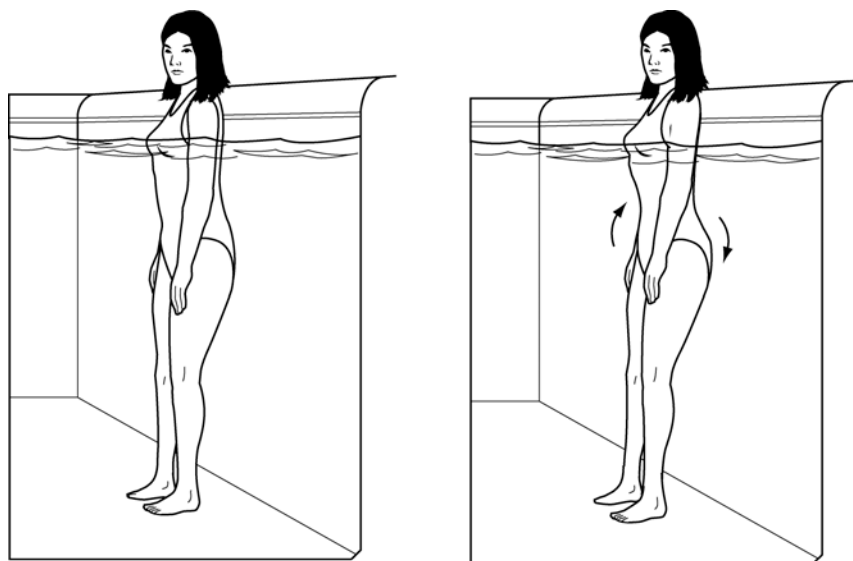
- ▶ You might also do this exercise against the wall of the pool for more balance. Stand with your feet about 6-8 inches from the wall of the pool and your back to the wall. Slide your back down along the wall of the pool as you bend your knees.



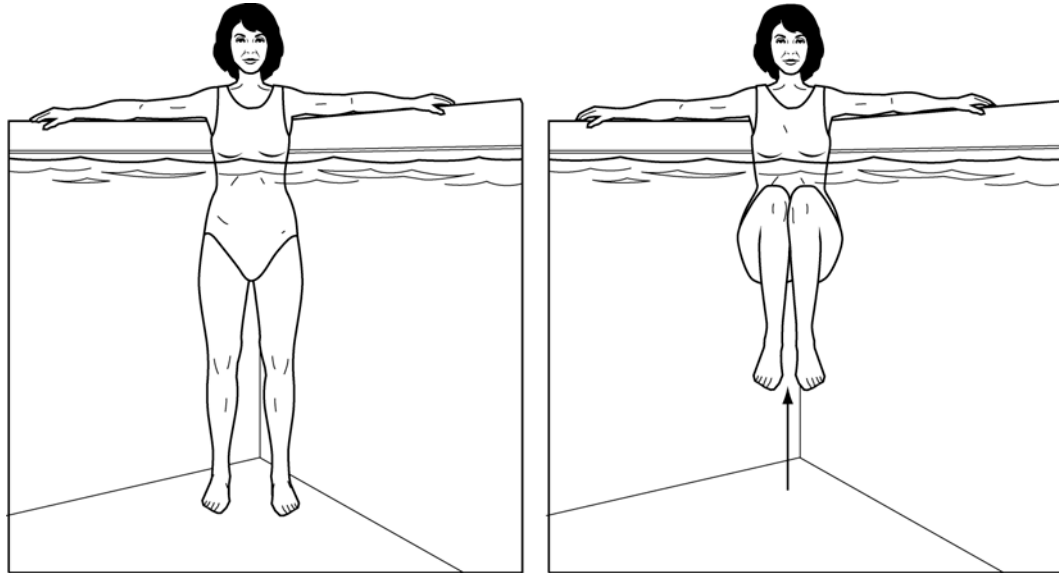
- ❑ 1. Pull your foot straight back, keeping your knee straight and toes up.
- 2. Move the foot forward in front of your body.
- 3. Repeat and then do the exercise with the other leg.



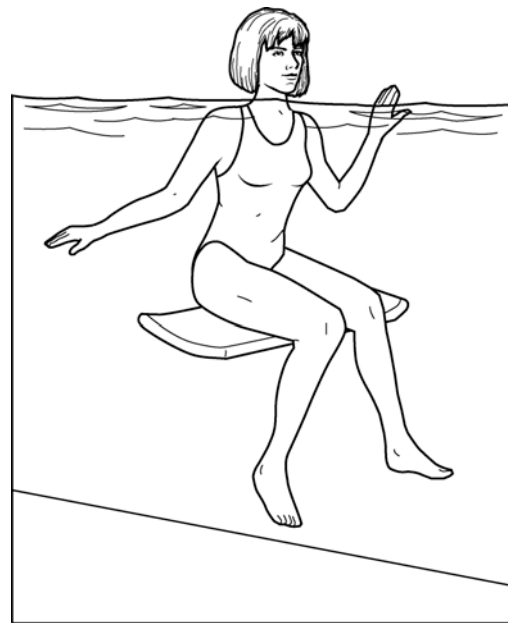
- ❑ 1. Stand with your feet about 6-8 inches from the wall with your upper back and buttocks against the wall of the pool.
- 2. Pull in your stomach and roll your hips down and back so you feel your lower back against the pool wall.



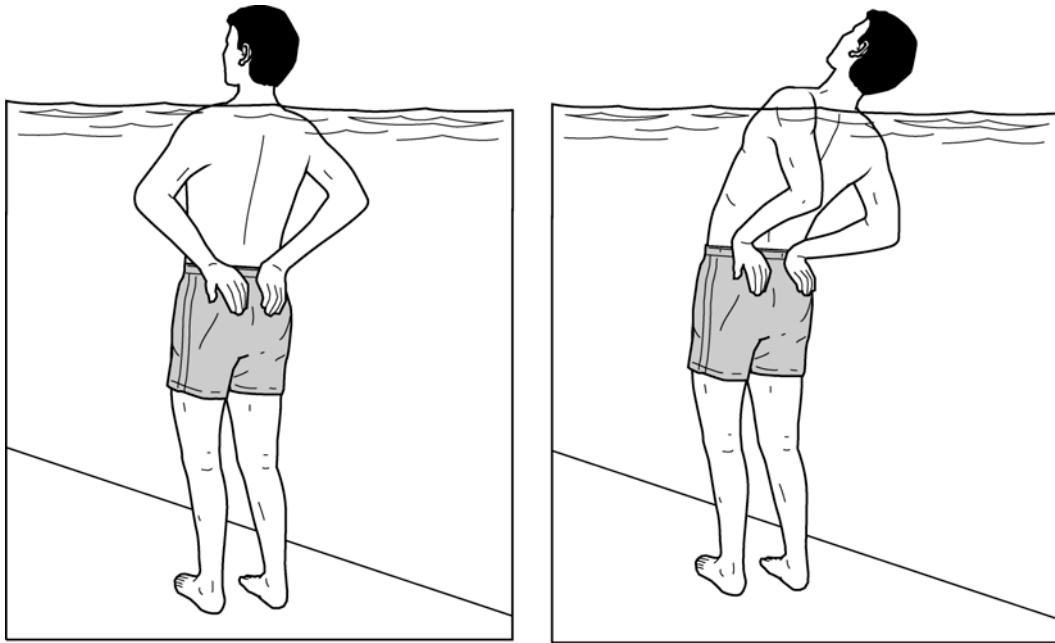
- ❑ 1. Stand in the corner of the pool with your arms out at shoulder height to support you.
- 2. Bend your knees and pull both legs up in front of you.
- 3. Hold and then put your feet back down and repeat.



- ❑ Use a flotation cushion or kick board for this exercise.
- 1. Hold on to the side of the pool.
- 2. Sit on the cushion or board and try to hold your balance.



- ❑ 1. Place your hands on your lower back at your waist.
- 2. Bend back and hold.
- 3. Relax and then repeat.



- **Talk to your doctor or others on your health care team if you have questions. You may request more written information from the Library for Health Information at (614) 293-3707 or email: health-info@osu.edu.**