

Fact sheet

Centre for Physical Activity in Ageing FAQs

The answers to frequently asked questions on exercising for older adults undergoing rehabilitation are found below:

'What if I don't have the energy to exercise?'

- Exercise is one of the best things you can do to improve your energy level.
- Exercising will revitalise you.
- Sitting around can increase your fatigue.
- There are bound to be days, however, when you just don't feel like exercising. Instead of skipping it entirely, just adjust your exercise routine by slowing your pace or shortening the distance you go.
- Some physical activity is always preferable to none at all. If you do miss a few days, try hard to get back into exercising as soon as possible.

'What if I don't have time to exercise?'

- The surprising thing you will discover about exercise is that it can create more time in your day.
- You feel better and have more energy when you exercise, so you work more effectively and get more accomplished.
- You may also find you get up earlier, stay up later, and sleep better as well.
- One trick that makes it easier to find time for exercise is to keep an appointment book, and block time for your exercise sessions the same way you would for any other important appointment.
- Schedule your exercise sessions first, then build the rest of the day around them. Another trick is to build exercise into your daily activities - ride your bike to work, take the stairs or garden with gusto.



'What if I don't have the proper equipment to exercise?'

- Contrary to what many people believe, initiating an exercise program does not require a huge investment in exercise equipment.
- Fast walking is a perfect example - all that is required is a good pair of shoes. Start with activities like fast walking, jogging, or cycling (if you already own a bike and a helmet).

'What if I don't like to exercise?'

- Exercise can really be enjoyable, but you have to choose the activities that you like. If you don't like running and swimming, think about other options like hiking, dancing, cross-country skiing, or ice skating.
- Consider putting an exercise bike or treadmill in front of the television. Whatever activity you choose, exercise can make such a great improvement in the way you look and feel that you soon may not want to go without it.

'What if I find exercise is too hard?'

- There is good news if you don't want to push yourself hard: modest levels of exercise have been shown to provide many of the same benefits of strenuous work-outs. In fact, both the Australian Physical Activity Guidelines recommend just 30 minutes of walking on most, if not all, days of the week.

The best way to develop an exercise routine is to start slowly and progress gradually. Any physical activity over and above what you now do will be beneficial, so don't demand too much of yourself right away. If you push yourself too hard, you won't enjoy it and may even injure yourself.

For more information

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