

# EXERCISE

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## Regular exercise will:

- Improve your ability to increase your daily life activities
- Help you to maintain or improve your independence
- Improve mood and decrease anxiety and depression

## QUESTION:

How much exercise should you do per week, and for how long?



## ANSWER:

You should aim to exercise for at least 5-10 minutes 3 times a week to begin with, and build this up to a level you feel comfortable with in conjunction with advice from the care team.

### Reference:

The Life Options Rehabilitation Advisory Council. Exercise: A Guide for the People on Dialysis. Available at: [www.lifeoptions.org](http://www.lifeoptions.org) [accessed May 2008].

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# EXERCISE

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## Be realistic.

- It can take a few weeks before you notice the difference in how you feel everyday but it is worth persevering to improve your long-term well being
- You will find some exercises easier than others to begin with; the difficult exercises will become easier with time
- You might miss some exercise sessions if you are not feeling well but don't use this as a reason to stop exercising. These sessions can always be rescheduled.

## QUESTION:

How does exercise benefit your dialysis sessions?



## ANSWER:

If you are on dialysis, exercise may help to:

- Reduce cramping during dialysis
- Increase the efficiency of dialysis

### Reference:

Kong CH, Tattersall JE, Greenwood RN *et al*. The effect of exercise during haemodialysis on solute removal. *Nephrol Dial Transplant* 1999; 14: 2927-2931.

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## Patients who should exercise include:

- Patients who are stable on haemodialysis treatment
- Patients with well controlled blood pressure
- Diabetic patients who have good control of their blood glucose levels

## QUESTION:

Who should not exercise?



## ANSWER:

- Patients who have suffered a heart attack or other heart problems in the past 6 weeks
- Patients who are unstable during dialysis
- Patients with symptoms of bone disease
- Patients with a body temperature of above 38°C (101.0°F)

### Reference:

Bayliss D. Starting and managing an intradialytic exercise program. *Nephrol News Issues* 2006; 20(9): 47-49.

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Before you start your exercise programme please speak to your nurse and your doctor to ensure that your exercise programme is safe and appropriate for you.

Make sure that you:

- Have good blood pressure control
- Are free from any conditions that may prevent you exercising
- Have good control of your blood glucose levels if you are diabetic

## QUESTION:

How can you measure your progress?



## ANSWER:

- A good way to keep track of your progress is in an exercise diary. Use this to log which activities you have been carrying out and how easy or difficult you have found these to do
- You can keep a record of the time you take to complete a particular exercise, or the distance you can walk in a particular time-frame and compare this with previous attempts

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Clothes for exercise should be cotton, loose-fitting and comfortable, and should not restrict your movement. Avoid tight-fitting clothing which may make exercise uncomfortable, and can lead to unnecessary sweating and fluid loss.

## QUESTION:

What kind of footwear is suitable for exercise?



## ANSWER:

Shoes or trainers are suitable and should be large enough to accommodate any swelling of the feet. They should also provide cushioning and arch support for your feet, especially if you are diabetic.

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Sweating can help to remove excess fluid from your body; however, exercise can also increase thirst. It is essential that you do not increase your fluid intake as this can lead to fluid overload.

### QUESTION:

Who should you consult if you feel you need to increase your fluid allowance due to exercise?



## ANSWER:

You should consult your nurse and consultant, who will advise you accordingly.  
You should not increase your fluid allowance without their approval.

### Reference:

The Life Options Rehabilitation Advisory Council. Exercise for the Dialysis Patient: A Guide for the Nephrologist. Available at: [www.lifeoptions.org](http://www.lifeoptions.org) [accessed May 2008].

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You can fit exercise around your normal activities. You could try to:

- Walk instead of taking the car for short journeys
- Carry out small tasks or lift small weights whilst sitting
- Walk around whilst speaking on the telephone
- Get off trains or buses one stop early and walk the remainder of the journey
- Use stairs instead of lifts or escalators whenever possible
- Go for a walk in your lunch hour at work
- Take regular walks in the evenings with friends or family members

## **QUESTION:**

What are the benefits of exercise?



## ANSWER:

Exercising has many benefits including: increasing your ability to carry out daily activities, maintaining or improving your independence, improving your mood and decreasing anxiety and depression, improving heart function and health.

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You should slow down when exercising if:

- You develop chest pain or palpitations
- You feel dizzy or light-headed
- You feel very tired or not able to continue
- You are too breathless to talk whilst exercising
- Your muscles become so sore that you cannot exercise the next day
- You have an unusually high heart rate
- You did not feel fully recovered after 1 hour with previous exercise

## QUESTION:

When should you not exercise?



## ANSWER:

Do not exercise if:

- You have a fever (over 38°C, 101.0°F)
- You have missed a dialysis session
- You have an untreated illness
- Your doctor or nurse advises you not to

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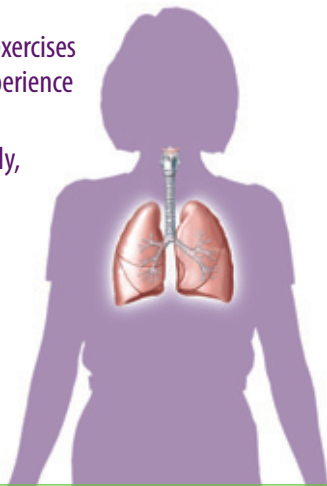
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- When carrying out exercises, take care not to over do them, which may lead to injuries.
- Do not hold your breath whilst carrying out exercises and stop if you feel faint, dizzy, unwell or experience any chest pain.
- You should start slowly and progress gradually, taking care to perform all exercises correctly.

## QUESTION:

Why are warm-up exercises important?



## ANSWER:

You should warm-up before you start your exercise programme in order to prevent muscle damage and soreness.

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Cardiovascular exercises are designed to increase the strength and health of your heart.

Members of your care team can advise you about the types and amounts of exercise you can start with. Eventually you should be able to exercise for about 30 minutes at a time but this may take some time to build up.

Try to find activities that you are comfortable with; some cardiovascular activities include walking, jogging, dancing, swimming and cycling.

## QUESTION:

Who should not participate in cardiovascular exercises?



**ANSWER:**

Cardiovascular exercises should not be attempted by those who have had a heart attack or other heart problems in the past 6 weeks, have uncontrolled blood pressure or uncontrolled blood sugars.

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