



Being Active When You Have **ASTHMA**

Prescription for Improving Healthy Body Status

Exercising when you have asthma is as easy as 1, 2, 3

Getting Started

Keep it Simple: Sit less and move more. You don't have to do big things. ANY physical activity is good. Walk to get your mail. Dance in the kitchen. Take the stairs instead of the elevator. All small things add up. Do aerobic activities and strength training.



1 Get Moving

What

Any continuous activity (biking, walking, dancing)

When

3-5 days/week

How Hard

Start very light and continue as shortness of breath and fatigue allow. The overall goal should be for you to talk while exercising, but not sing.

On a scale of 1-10 you should aim to move between a 2-6.

1=short walk to get the mail
2-6= walking around the block, dancing in the kitchen
10=hard running

How Long

When you first start out, only exercise for a few minutes at a time. Aim for 3 minutes of exercise at a time. As you exercise more increase your time by 3 minutes.

Example:

Week 1: Walk around your block at a level 2

Week 2: Walk around your block at level 3 and then add another 3 minutes of walking.

Week 3: Walk around your block at level 4 and add another 6 minutes of walking.

Keep this going for the next 2-3 months. Eventually you want to work up 30 minutes of exercise at a time.

PERCEIVED EXERTION CHART

10	Very, Very Hard Activity Completely out of breath, unable to talk
9	Very Hard activity Can speak only one word at a time
7-8	Hard Activity Out of breath, can speak a sentence or two
4-6	Moderate Activity Can talk but not sing
2-3	Light Activity Breathing is easy, can talk and sing
1	No Activity

Special Considerations: Carry your rescue inhaler with you any time you exercise. You may need to use your inhaler before and/or after exercise. Time your exercise for mid to late morning. Avoid cold, dry air and exercising in pools treated with chemicals. These may trigger asthma attacks. Work up to the intensity that is right for you.



2 Get Strong

What

Start by using your own body weight.

Do each of the following:

Sit & Stands: Sit in a steady chair – using a kitchen chair is ideal, and then stand up.

Calf Raises: Stand with your feet flat on the floor and shoulder-width apart. Raise yourself onto your toes and then lower your heels back to the floor. If you need to, stand near a countertop and hold onto it for extra balance.

Knee Lifts: In a standing position raise one knee. Lower your foot flat to the floor and raise the other knee.

Do each of these exercises 10 times. Rest 1 minute in between exercises if you need.

Example: 10 sit and stands, rest 1 minute, 10 calf raises, rest 1 minute, 10 knee lifts, rest 1 minute.

As you get stronger, you can add hand weights and resistance bands.

When

2-3 days/week.
Rest at least one day in between.

How Hard

Start slowly. On a scale of 1-10 you should be working at 4-8.

- 1=sitting on the couch
- 4=just able to feel your muscles being used
- 8=sweating during the exercise
- 10=can't do the exercise.

How Long

10 repetitions to start. Build up as you can.



3 Get Stretching

What

Stretching is a great way to make your muscles strong and reduce joint stress.

Do each of the following:

Arm Circles:



Toe Touches:



Waist Twists:



When

You should stretch before and after every exercise session.

How Hard

Stretch as far as you can until you feel muscle tightness. Don't overstretch, this could hurt your muscle. If you can't quite touch your toes, aim for your calf or your knees.

How Long

Do 5-10 of each stretch before and after every exercise session. Stretch before you walk and after your walk is done. Stretch before you do your knee lifts, sit to stands and calf raises, and stretch when you are done.

Performing these exercises, including the suggested frequency, intensity and duration will help you meet the American College of Sports Medicine Guidelines for exercise participation and improve your health and fitness.

Local Resources

Free: Footprints for Fitness (Saginaw Center Courts), Walk with a Doc (YMCA)

Paid: Scan QR code for additional resources

