



Being Active When You Have HEART FAILURE

Prescription for Improving Healthy Body Status

Exercising with Heart Failure is as easy as 1, 2, 3

Being active is an important way to help you sleep better & feel better. Exercising can help lower your risk of going to the emergency room with chest pain, shortness of breath and tiredness.

Getting Started

Keep it Simple: Sit less and move more. You don't have to do big things to get big benefits from exercise. You can walk to your mailbox, dance in the kitchen, take the stairs instead of the elevator. Any movement you make counts.

Keep Your Goals in Mind

Before you start exercising set 2 goals you want to achieve. You may want to dance to a whole song without feeling out of breath or push your grandkids on the swing without feeling tired. Focus on these goals when you are exercising.



1 Get Moving

What

Any continuous activity.
(biking, walking, water exercises)

When

3-5 days/week

How Hard

- **Start very light and continue to work up as chest pain 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

- **Start with just a few minutes.** You might start with 5-10 minutes here and there throughout the day.
- Or you might be able to do 1 minute workouts a few times a day. Whatever you can do is ok. Do what you can and keep increasing how long you exercise until you get to 30 minutes a day.
- *Example:*
- **Week 1:** Walk around your block at a level 2 for 3 days out of the week
- **Week 2:** If you feel you can increase your exercise this week, walk around your block at a level 3 for 3 days out of the week.
- If you can't increase your activity, keep exercise the same as week 1.
- **Week 3:** If you feel you can increase your exercise this week, walk around your block at level 3 and then add another 3 minutes of walking for 3-4 days out of the week. If you can't increase your activity, keep exercise the same as week 2.
- **Week 4:** If you feel you can increase your exercise this week, walk around your block at level 3-4 and add another 6 minutes of walking for 3-4 days out of the week. If you can't increase your activity, keep exercise the same as week 2.
- Keep this going for the next 2-3 months. Eventually you want to work up 30 minutes of exercise at a time.

Special Considerations: Start small and increase your pace and time as you go along. Warm up for 5 minutes and cool down for 5 minutes every time you exercise. Avoid exercising outside if it is too hot or too cold because this can stress your heart. On those days complete your exercise inside.

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



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, and your chest pain gets less, you can add hand weights and resistance bands.

When : How Hard

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

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.

Special Considerations: Avoid straining or holding your breath when you strength train. This can cause strain on your heart.

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.



3 Get Stretching

What

Stretching is a great way to make you more mobile. You should stretch before and after every exercise session.

Do each of the following:

Arm Circles:



Toe Touches:



Waist Twists:



When

You should stretch before and after every exercise session.

How Hard : How Long

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.

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.

Keep in mind: There will be days that your fatigue doesn't allow you to exercise. On those days when you don't have enough energy to walk or bike, do what you can. Even if you can just stretch that is ok. Do what your body allows.

Local Resources

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

Paid: Scan QR code for additional resources

