

Fitness in Everyday Life

Watch video: 23 ½ hours: What is the single best thing we can do for our health? – List the main message:

What are the benefits of exercise?

- Exercise can help increase your independence and help you move better.
- Exercise can have a positive impact on your mental health and self-esteem. It can make you feel good!

Exercise can reduce your risk of certain conditions. These conditions include:

- High blood pressure
- Obesity
- Heart disease / stroke
- Certain types of cancer
- Alzheimer's disease
- Type 2 diabetes
- Osteoporosis
- Any more

Dig deeper: How will exercising regularly impact the rest of your life and who/what you value?

What are some barriers stopping me from exercising, and what can I do about them?

- **Too much pain / fear of re-injury** — increase your understanding of chronic pain and the effects on the nervous system. Pace yourself and use self-talk.
- **Not enough time** — make exercise a part of your everyday routines such as “raising your heels” while brushing your teeth. Exercise a few times a day for a short amount of time. Better to do less exercises more often throughout the day, such as 2 to 3 exercises, 4 to 5 times a day.

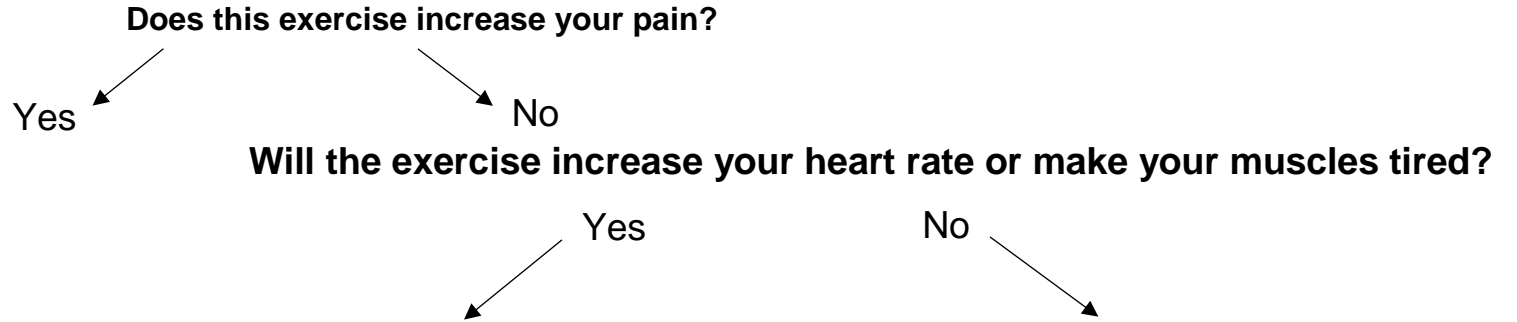
- **Too boring** — choose activities you enjoy! Change it up and vary your activities. Exercise with a friend or join a program in your community or walk your dog.
- **Bad weather** — plan ahead and dress for the weather. Dress in layers.
- **Not confident, you are unsure what to do** — try to make sure that you know how to do your exercises before leaving the program. Write notes on your exercise sheets to help remind you how to do them.

Please ask us questions! Different levels of each exercise are demonstrated in Fitness Class. Knowing these different levels will allow you to increase your confidence to do exercises despite your day.

- **Too tired** — exercise is one of the best long-term ways to manage fatigue.
- **Down mood** — consistently exercising can help with mood.
- **Too expensive** — there are free or low cost activities such as mall walking, free library DVDs, cell phone apps.
- **No equipment** — you do not have to have specific equipment to exercise. Many exercises just use your own body weight.
- **Keep putting it off (procrastination)** — set goals, find something that motivates you, prioritize tasks that need to be done, link existing task done daily to a specific exercise.
- **Forget** — use a calendar, sticky notes, journal or smartphone to help remind you to exercise and to track your progress.
- **Guilt, taking time away from family or work** — it is important to take some time for yourself each day and that exercising is important for your health.

Rethinking Exercise

Exercise is not just for strengthening and stretching muscles. Exercise also changes your nervous system. How can you use exercise to help with your persistent pain? It can be helpful to think of three categories of exercises and to try and do at least one of each:



<p><u>Category 1: Challenge your nervous system</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nudge the pain, don't push through - Change your sensitive alarm system - See back page on "Recovering Movement in Persistent Pain" 	<p><u>Category 2: Challenge your body</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Start with an easy amount that you can do with good form - Slowly increase resistance, repetitions, weight, speed, distance, range of motion, etc 	<p><u>Category 3: Calm your body and nervous system</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are there certain exercises you find calming or soothing, where you feel in control?
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All done with calmer breath, calmer body, calmer mind. Choose exercises you enjoy!

Can you find at least one exercise in each category?

1) Challenge your nervous system	2) Challenge your body	3) Calm your body and nervous system

Note: challenging your body still affects your nervous system and is helpful for calming down the nervous system in the long term. It is divided here into three categories for simplicity but in reality, all exercises will affect your body and your nervous system.

Recovering Movement in Persistent Pain

(adapted from lifeisnow.ca)

1) First, move to the edge of increased pain.

Or choose a gentle, challenging activity.

And then,

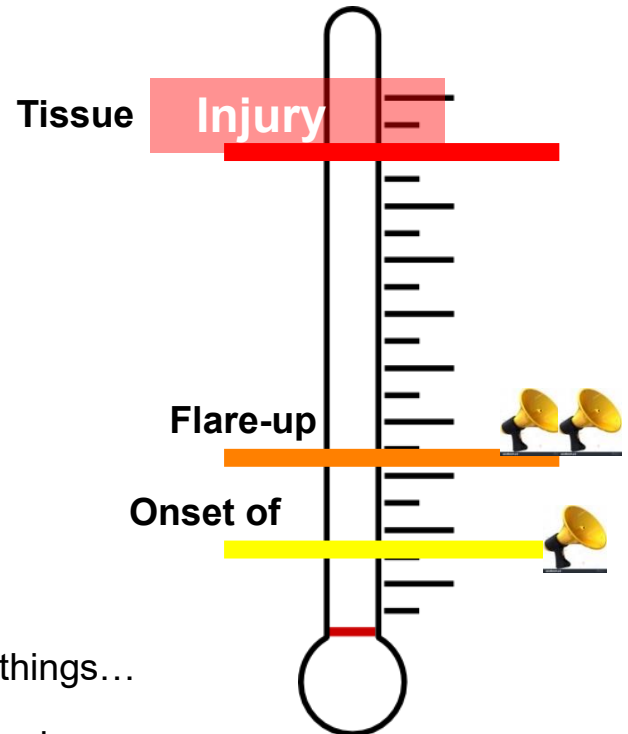
- a. Ask yourself: Is this activity safe for my body to do?
- b. Ask yourself: Will I be okay later?

2) Then, stay at the edge while you do three things...

- a. **Calmer breath:** Keep your breath as calm as you can
- b. **Calmer body:** Keep your body and muscle tension low
- c. **Calmer mind:** Monitor the pain, do not ignore it, or pay too much attention to it

Remember, the pain is a moving target so practice will be needed to start to succeed.

Every time you succeed with this, even a little, you are creating positive changes in your nervous systems.



How can I start fitting exercises into my daily life so that it becomes a habit?

Some ideas:

- 1) Research shows that it is easier to make a behavior a habit if you attach it to something that is already a regular part of your daily routine. For example:
 - a. brush your teeth + do 10 calf raises
 - b. before getting out of car + do 5 C-J exercises
 - c. before getting out of bed + do 10 windshield wiper exercises
- 2) Learn how to do exercises in sitting and standing positions so that you can do them anywhere
- 3) Get off the bus one stop earlier so you get to walk more
- 4) Park further away so you can walk more
- 5) Go for a walk regularly with a family member (or friend) so that it can help keep you accountable
- 6) Make it your responsibility to walk your dog, or walk to end of the driveway to pick up mail
- 7) After a meal, set aside 10 minutes to walk
- 8) Progressing walk by slowly increasing time, tempo, up hills/stairs, add in arms with walking sticks or wrist weights
- 9) Put up reminders (sticky notes)/calendars around your home (mirror, fridge), cell phone reminders, tell somebody

How do I make an exercise goal? (S.M.A.R.T)

Specific — which exercises are you going to do? When will you do them? Where?

Measurable — put a number to it: how many or how long?

- Will you progress the length of time or reps? If so, how will you progress it?
Aim for no more than 10% increase each week

Attainable — make a realistic change you are confident about achieving, even if it's small. Small changes add up. Ask yourself- How confident are you that you will achieve the goal? Rate on a scale from 0 to 10 (0 means no confidence and 10 means super confident)

Relevant — why is this goal important to you?

Time bound — when will you review your goal to see how it is going?

Goal #1: Challenge your Nervous System

Goal #2: Challenge your Body

Goal #3: Challenge your Nervous System and Body

Lastly, how will you congratulate yourself when you review your goals and the successes you've had?
