Benefits and Barriers to Exercise

Exercising appropriately is an important component in managing your condition, although there may be some restrictions on the types of exercise you can do. The benefits of exercise are both physical and psychological. The World Health Organisation recommends that all adults should do 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity five days per week. This can be broken down and spread out to suit your capability.This advice is to improve and maintain health and is relevant to most people irrespective of age or underlying medical conditions. The important thing to remember is that your exercise should be appropriate to you, taking into account your age, condition and how fit or active you are to begin with.

Benefits of Exercise

Immediate physical benefits:

- Improved sleep
- Regulation of blood glucose levels
- Appropriate exercise enhances relaxation
- Reduced muscle tension
- Increase levels of endorphins – the body's natural pain killer

Long term physical benefits:

- Aerobic/cardiovascular endurance
- Muscle strengthening
- Flexibility
- Balance and co-ordination is improved which is a major factor in preventing falls
- General well-being
- Postpones age-related decline in the speed of processing for the nervous system and improved reaction time
- Motor control and performance – helps with both fine and gross motor control
- Improves the efficiency of the immune system – fighting off infections
- Reduces your chances of having a heart attack
- Strengthens bones, reducing the risk of osteoporosis

Immediate psychological benefits:

- Relaxation
- Reduces stress and anxiety
- Enhances mood through increased endorphins
- Sense of achievement

Long term psychological benefits:

- General well-being is enhanced
- Improved mental health – helps to manage depression and anxiety
- Cognitive improvements – improves age-related decline in memory, attention and reaction times
- Improved motor control and performance enhances self-confidence
- New skills can be learnt and existing skills refined

Barriers to Exercise

All too often we find reasons not to exercise. Some of the common problems encountered are listed below, along with possible solutions.

Being physically active is too expensive. It takes equipment, special shoes and clothes…and sometimes you even have to pay to use sports facilities.

Physical activity can be done almost anywhere and does not necessarily require equipment!

Carrying things around the house is a good complementary physical activity, as is climbing the stairs instead of using the lift. Walking is perhaps the most practiced and most highly recommended physical activity and it is absolutely free. It is not imperative to go to a gym, pool or other special sports facility to be physically active. If you want to do more specialised activities or join a gym or class your physiotherapist can discuss what is appropriate for you and what is available locally and in the community.

I don't have enough time

Everyone has the same amount of time; we just choose to use it differently. Try combining activities, such as doing exercises whilst watching the television.

I'm too tired

When you're out of condition, you tend to feel drained and tire easily. You don't exercise because you feel tired and this becomes a vicious cycle. By starting to exercise at a low level and progressing gradually you can break out of the cycle. As you get fitter you may find you have more energy and are able to do more without tiring.

I'm too old

No-one is too old for some type of physical exercise. Irrespective of your age or fitness levels you can always improve.

I'm too ill

It may be true that your condition limits the type of exercise you can do, but under these circumstances it is just as important to 'keep yourself going'. It may be possible to adapt exercises so that you can do them in a chair or on the bed.

Exercise is painful

Exercise shouldn't be painful and the perception of "no pain no gain" is wrong and out of date. When you first start exercising gently you may get some pain and stiffness afterwards, but this is a normal response as your body adapts. These feelings should ease within a couple of weeks, but if you are still unsure please discuss it with your physiotherapist. See the section on "Pacing and setting baselines".

Web Address:
http://www.cht.nhs.uk/services/clinical-services/physiotherapy-outpatients/patient-careinformation/

QR Code:
Scan the QR code below to take you to our website.

If you have any comments about this leaflet or the service you have received you can contact :

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MSK physiotherapy Admin Office

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www.cht.nhs.uk

If you would like this information in another format or language contact the above.

Potřebujete-li tyto informace v jiném formátu nebo jazyce, obraťte se prosím na výše uvedené oddělení

Jeżeli są Państwo zainteresowani otrzymaniem tych informacji w innym formacie lub wersji językowej, prosimy skontaktować się z nami, korzystając z ww. danych kontaktowych

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اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور فارمیٹ یا زبان میں درکار ہوں، تو
برائے مہربانی مندرجہ بالا شعبے میں ہم سے رابطہ کریں.

"إذا احتجت الحصول على هذه المعلومة بشكل مغاير أو مترجمة إلى لغة مختلفة فيرجى منك الاتصال بالقسم المذكور أعلاه"