Care Connections℠

ALS

FEBRUARY 2021

Managing cramps and spasms

Muscle cramps and spasms can put a wrinkle in your day. You probably already know this very well. In amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), the nerve impulses that control your muscles don't work well. So, your muscles and nerves get irritated and tired. Then, your muscles cramp and can hurt. You are more likely to get a cramp if you have exercised too much or the muscle is cold.

Like cramps, muscle spasms happen because the nerves that control movement (motor nerves) do not work well. Spasms cause your muscles to get stiff and rigid but are not always painful. Usually, the entire limb (for instance, a leg) will either stiffen (extend) or flex. Spasms can affect more than one muscle at a time. You probably do not experience spasms too often, as they are not common.

You may already have experience dealing with cramps or spasms and know what to do. If you are just starting to deal with these issues, make sure to tell your doctor. There are medications that can help. Spasms and cramps are treated differently, though. So, your doctor will need to know the cause of your symptoms.

Here are some general things to help lower your chances for spasms and cramps. These tips can help you get the most from your exercise:

- Make sure to drink plenty of water—before, during, and after activity.
- Take time to stretch before and after exercising.
- If you have poor circulation, keep the affected area warm.
- Massage your muscles before and after exercise.
- Experiment with applying heat or cold to the affected area.
- Do what activity you can, at the pace you can.
- Rest when you need to.
- Stay in touch with your doctor about how you are doing.
- If you feel the exercise is not helping, ask your doctor about seeing a physical therapist. The therapist can recommend helpful exercises and can also tell if special equipment, like a splint or brace, might help.

Knowing the difference between cramps and spasms matters because each is treated differently. Let your doctor know when you are having muscle issues.

Have more questions? Give your program nurse a call. Your nurse can help you plan an exercise program that will best suit your needs and help keep you strong.

Preparing your action plan

Do you know what an "action plan" is? It is a written plan you make with your doctor to help control your ALS. A good action plan should cover all aspects of your care, from tracking symptoms, to medicines and side effects, emergency plans, and doctor instructions. No matter the issue, a good action plan is there to guide you.

You can put just about anything you need in an action plan. Here are some things you might want to have in yours:

- Your doctor's phone number and how to reach your doctor after hours.
- Names and doses of all your medicine, even things you buy at the drug store, like vitamins, herbal supplements, or aspirin.
- The names and phone numbers of any drug store or company where you get medicine or medical supplies.
- A list of problems that may happen with ALS and what to do about them.
- Tips for managing ALS at home, like when and how to take your medicine.
- An up-to-date schedule for the lab tests and vaccines you may need, such as nerve conduction studies, as well as flu and pneumonia shots.

Action plans can be made on a computer or be hand-written. It's also good to make many copies for yourself and others. The members of your care team—doctors, nurses, family, and friends—can help you best when they know about your care. Show your action plan to each of your doctors. Let them read it and talk about it with you. If you have several different doctors, this can help you get the best care possible.

Need help getting started? Give your program nurse a call. Your nurse can show you sample action plans and help you write your own.

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Care Connections℠

CIDP

FEBRUARY 2021

Exercise and CIDP

Exercise is one of the best things a person can do for body and mind. It's the same when you have chronic inflammatory demyelinating polyneuropathy (CIDP). Getting physical helps you to feel more in control of your health. It also offers these benefits:

- Better total strength and mobility
- Better mood
- More energy
- Less pain
- Fewer muscle cramps
- Lower risk of falls

Talk to your doctor about the exercise you are most interested in doing. These types can be good when you have CIDP:

- Passive: This is gentle body movement performed by a helper. It helps blood flow and range of motion.
- Active-assisted: You do some of the movement. Someone else helps. This activates your muscles.
- Active (no gravity, gravity reduced, and against gravity)
    - No gravity: You move with no gravity effect (lift your knee towards your chest while lying down).
    - Gravity reduced: You move partly against gravity (bend your hip).
    - Against gravity: You move fully against gravity (bend your hip while standing).
- Resistive: You work against resistance (light weights, stretchy bands, body weight).

Your doctor might also suggest gentle stretching, aerobic, and strength training moves. Low-impact efforts like pool exercises, walking, and bicycling are good choices. So are balancing exercises.

Ask your doctor about seeing a physical therapist. They can tell you what type of activity to do. They know how often, how hard, and when to exercise to get the best results. They can also teach you to how to save your energy and use assistive devices if you need them.

To get the most from physical activity, find something you can stay with. Change happens in small steps. Be patient, listen to your body, and have fun!

Have more questions? Give your program nurse a call. Your nurse can help you plan an exercise program that will best suit your needs and help keep you strong.

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Preparing your action plan

Do you know what an "action plan" is? It is a written plan you make with your doctor to help control your CIDP. A good action plan should cover all aspects of your care, from tracking symptoms, to medicines and side effects, emergency plans, and doctor instructions. No matter the issue, a good action plan is there to guide you.

You can put just about anything you need in an action plan. Here are some things you might want to have in yours:

- Your doctor's phone number and how to reach your doctor after hours.
- Names and doses of all your medicine, even things you buy at the drug store, like vitamins, herbal supplements, or aspirin.
- The names and phone numbers of any drug store or company where you get medicine or medical supplies.
- A list of problems that may happen with CIDP and what to do about them.
- Tips for managing CIDP at home, like when and how to take your medicine.
- An up-to-date schedule for the lab tests and vaccines you may need, such as nerve conduction studies, as well as flu and pneumonia shots.

Action plans can be made on a computer or be hand-written. It's also good to make many copies for yourself and others. The members of your care team—doctors, nurses, family, and friends—can help you best when they know about your care. Show your action plan to each of your doctors. Let them read it and talk about it with you. If you have several different doctors, this can help you get the best care possible.

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Care Connections℠

Cystic Fibrosis

FEBRUARY 2021

Exercise and CF

Exercise is one of the best things a person can do for body and mind. It's no different when you have cystic fibrosis (CF). Here are just some of the benefits of regular activity:

- Strong muscles
- Sturdy bones
- Strong heart and lungs
- Better mood
- Good sleep
- Less risk for other sickness like diabetes and heart disease
- More energy

One special benefit of exercise specifically related to CF is the ability of exercise to help with cough and sputum clearance. Aerobic activities—those that make your heart and lungs strong—work well with airway clearance techniques and are a great choice when you have CF. Always talk with your doctor about the best way to manage your airways, though.

Talk to your doctor about the exercise you most want to do. Consider walking, biking, swimming, dancing, and/or jogging. You can also add more activity into your daily routine. Here are some ideas:

- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Meet a friend for a daily walk.
- Park farther away from the door when you go shopping.
- Play your favorite music and dance through daily chores.

For fitness, you only need to be moderately active for about 150 minutes a week. Moderate activity is a level where you are slightly out of breath and might have some difficulty talking but can still do so. Aim to be active at least 3 or 4 days a week. To build muscle fitness, add in some strength training twice a week. Progress at a pace that is comfortable for you.

Talk to your doctor about how to start exercising. The key is to find something you can stay with. Remember that change happens in small steps. Be patient, listen to your body, and have fun!

Speak with your doctor before exercising if you have any of these:

- Acute CF symptoms
- Pain in your joints
- Breathlessness (running out of air)
- Blood when you cough
- Collapsed lung
- Obstruction in your gut (intestines)
- Recent surgery or C-section
- Fever

Have more questions? Give your program nurse a call. Your nurse can help you plan an exercise program that will best suit your needs and help keep you strong.

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Preparing your action plan

Do you know what an "action plan" is? It is a written plan you make with your doctor to help control your CF. A good action plan should cover all aspects of your care, from tracking symptoms, to medicines and side effects, emergency plans, and doctor instructions. No matter the issue, a good action plan is there to guide you.

You can put just about anything you need in an action plan. Here are some things you might want to have in yours:

- Your doctor's phone number and how to reach your doctor after hours.
- Names and doses of all your medicine, even things you buy at the drug store, like vitamins, herbal supplements, or aspirin.
- The names and phone numbers of any drug store or company where you get medicine or medical supplies.
- A list of problems that may happen with CF and what to do about them.
- Tips for managing CF at home, like when and how to take your medicine.
- An up-to-date schedule for the lab tests and vaccines you may need, such as respiratory tests, as well as flu and pneumonia shots.

Action plans can be made on a computer or be hand-written. It's also good to make many copies for yourself and others. The members of your care team—doctors, nurses, family, and friends—can help you best when they know about your care. Show your action plan to each of your doctors. Let them read it and talk about it with you. If you have several different doctors, this can help you get the best care possible.

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Care Connections℠

Gaucher

FEBRUARY 2021

Exercise and Gaucher

Exercise is one of the best things a person can do for body and mind. It's no different when you have Gaucher disease. Regular exercise helps you to feel more in control of your health. It also offers these benefits:

- Strong muscles
- Sturdy bones
- Better mood
- Good sleep
- Less risk for other diseases like diabetes and heart conditions
- More energy
- Weight control

Talk with your doctor about the exercise you are most interested in doing. You can do many types of activities, but keep these things in mind:

- If your spleen is bigger than normal, it's best to avoid contact sports. This will lower your chances for a bleed.
- If your platelet count is low, avoid contact sports.
- If you have had a knee or hip replacement, skip high-impact sports (jogging or downhill skiing, for example).

Swimming is especially good. It strengthens your muscles without straining your joints. It also builds aerobic fitness. Walking, biking, and dancing are good for you, too. Weight-bearing exercises, like strength training (lifting weights) and resistance exercises (pushups and movements using stretchy resistance bands) strengthen your muscles and bones.

You can also add more activity into your daily routine. Here are some ideas:

- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Meet a friend for a daily walk.
- Park farther away from the door when you go shopping.
- Play your favorite music and dance through daily chores.

You only need to be moderately active for 150 minutes a week. Moderate activity is a level where you are slightly out of breath and might have some difficulty talking but can still do so. Aim to be active at least 3 or 4 days a week. For even more benefit, add in some strength training twice a week. Stretching and balancing exercises can improve joint movement, build strength, and add variety to your routine.

Talk to your doctor about how to start exercising. The key is to find something you can stay with. Remember that change happens in small steps. Be patient, listen to your body, and have fun!

Have more questions? Give your program nurse a call. Your nurse can help you plan an exercise program that will best suit your needs and help keep you strong.

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS HEALTH BENEFIT PLAN

Preparing your action plan

Do you know what an "action plan" is? It is a written plan you make with your doctor to help control your Gaucher disease. A good action plan should cover all aspects of your care, from tracking symptoms, to medicines and side effects, emergency plans, and doctor instructions. No matter the issue, a good action plan is there to guide you.

You can put just about anything you need in an action plan. Here are some things you might want to have in yours:

- Your doctor's phone number and how to reach your doctor after hours.
- Names and doses of all your medicine, even things you buy at the drug store, like vitamins, herbal supplements, or aspirin.
- The names and phone numbers of any drug store or company where you get medicine or medical supplies.
- A list of problems that may happen with Gaucher and what to do about them.
- Tips for managing Gaucher at home, like when and how to take your medicine.
- An up-to-date schedule for the lab tests and vaccines you may need, such as flu and pneumonia shots.

Action plans can be made on a computer or be hand-written. It's also good to make many copies for yourself and others. The members of your care team—doctors, nurses, family, and friends—can help you best when they know about your care. Show your action plan to each of your doctors. Let them read it and talk about it with you. If you have several different doctors, this can help you get the best care possible.

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Care Connections℠

Hemophilia

FEBRUARY 2021

Exercise and hemophilia

Exercise is one of the best things a person can do for body and mind. It's no different when you have hemophilia. Regular physical activity offers big benefits:

- Strong muscles and bones
- Lower risk of joint bleeds
- Improved mood, with less anxiety and depression
- Better sleep
- Less chance for getting other diseases like diabetes, heart disease, and stroke
- More energy and endurance

You might be worried that exercise is risky, painful, or harmful. But that is not always true. These steps can help keep you healthy and safe:

- Always speak with your physician before starting a fitness program. Together, you can create an activity plan to follow.
- Think about the kinds of exercise you like, and your goals.
- Strictly adhere with your doctor's prescribed hemophilia drug treatment.
- Weigh the risks and benefits of the activity.
- Review your personal history—do you have any muscle or joint limitations related to a past bleed?
- Do you need or want to work with a physical therapist or trainer to address specific issues or weak areas? If you are new to exercise, this is a great step to take.
- Understand that if you do get hurt, it might take more time and care to heal than usual.
- Make sure you know how to quickly handle a bleed, just in case it happens.

You'll want to choose your activities carefully. Team sports and/or those where you could fall or collide with something or someone are high-risk. Ask your doctor what kinds of exercise are best for you. He may recommend low-impact activities that you can control. Examples are:

- Aquatics/swimming
- Archery
- Bowling
- Golf
- Hiking
- Stationary bicycling
- Tai chi
- Walking

Remember that fitness increases in small steps. Be patient, listen to your body, and have fun!

Have more questions? Give your program nurse a call. Your nurse can help you plan an exercise program that will best suit your needs and help keep you strong.

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Preparing your action plan

Do you know what an “action plan” is? It is a written plan you make with your doctor to help control your hemophilia. A good action plan should cover all aspects of your care, from tracking symptoms, to medicines and side effects, emergency plans, and doctor instructions. No matter the issue, a good action plan is there to guide you.

You can put just about anything you need in an action plan. Here are some things you might want to have in yours:

- Your doctor’s phone number and how to reach your doctor after hours.
- Names and doses of all your medicine, even things you buy at the drug store, like vitamins, herbal supplements, or aspirin.
- The names and phone numbers of any drug store or company where you get medicine or medical supplies.
- A list of problems that may happen with hemophilia and what to do about them.
- Tips for managing hemophilia at home, like when and how to take your medicine.
- An up-to-date schedule for the lab tests and vaccines you may need, such as a factor assay, as well as flu and pneumonia shots.

Action plans can be made on a computer or be hand-written. It’s also good to make many copies for yourself and others. The members of your care team—doctors, nurses, family, and friends—can help you best when they know about your care. Show your action plan to each of your doctors. Let them read it and talk about it with you. If you have several different doctors, this can help you get the best care possible.

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Care Connections℠

Lupus

FEBRUARY 2021

Exercise and lupus

Exercise is one of the best things anyone can do for body and mind. It's no different when you have lupus. Physical activity helps you to feel more in control of your health. It also offers these benefits:

- Strong muscles, heart, and lungs
- Better overall strength
- Improved mood and brain function
- Good sleep
- Less fatigue
- Weight control (especially helpful if you take steroids)

Talk to your doctor about the exercise you are most interested in doing. Consider trying these tips:

- Remember to stretch before and after exercising.
- Start slowly. Plan to progress at a pace that is comfortable.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Manage fatigue by exercising when you have the most energy. Allow time for rest breaks.
- If you go to a gym, wipe down equipment before using it and/or cover the pads with a towel to guard against skin infection.
- If you exercise outdoors, be careful to protect yourself from the sun—even on cloudy days. These simple steps can help lower your risk of a flare:
  - Stay away from direct sunlight between 10 AM and 4 PM
  - Use sun block with an SPF of at least 70

You might want to try different kinds of exercise. Aerobic exercise is great for beating fatigue. Low-impact activities help protect your joints. Swimming, which is easy on your joints, promotes flexibility. Walking and biking can strengthen your muscles, bones, heart, and lungs. Yoga, strength training (using weights), and resistance exercises (using stretchy bands) build your core muscles and improve balance.

To improve fitness, you only need to be moderately active for 150 minutes a week. Moderate activity is a level where you are slightly out of breath and might have some difficulty talking but can still do so. For more benefit, add in strength training twice a week. You can also build exercise into your daily routine. Take the stairs instead of the elevator when you can. Try parking farther away from the front door of stores when you shop.

Talk to your doctor about how to start exercising. A physical therapist or trainer with lupus experience is another great resource. The key is to find something you can stay with. Remember that change happens in small steps. Be patient, listen to your body, and have fun!

For more resources and information about lupus, visit the National Resource Center on Lupus at www.lupus.org.

Have more questions? Give your program nurse a call. Your nurse can help you plan an exercise program that will best suit your needs and help keep you strong.

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Preparing your action plan

Do you know what an “action plan” is? It is a written plan you make with your doctor to help control your lupus. A good action plan should cover all aspects of your care, from tracking symptoms, to medicines and side effects, emergency plans, and doctor instructions. No matter the issue, a good action plan is there to guide you.

You can put just about anything you need in an action plan. Here are some things you might want to have in yours:

- Your doctor’s phone number and how to reach your doctor after hours.
- Names and doses of all your medicine, even things you buy at the drug store, like vitamins, herbal supplements, or aspirin.
- The names and phone numbers of any drug store or company where you get medicine or medical supplies.
- A list of problems that may happen with lupus and what to do about them.
- Tips for managing lupus at home, like when and how to take your medicine.
- An up-to-date schedule for the lab tests and vaccines you may need, such as blood and urine tests, as well as flu and pneumonia shots.

Action plans can be made on a computer or be hand-written. It’s also good to make many copies for yourself and others. The members of your care team—doctors, nurses, family, and friends—can help you best when they know about your care. Show your action plan to each of your doctors. Let them read it and talk about it with you. If you have several different doctors, this can help you get the best care possible.

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Care Connections℠

Multiple Sclerosis

FEBRUARY 2021

Exercise and MS

Exercise is one of the best things anyone can do for body and mind. It's no different when you have multiple sclerosis (MS). Physical activity helps you to feel more in control of your health. It also offers these benefits:

- Strong muscles, heart, and lungs
- Better overall strength
- Improved mood and brain function
- Good sleep
- Less fatigue
- Better bladder and bowel function

Talk to your doctor about the exercise you are most interested in doing. Consider trying these tips:

- Avoid getting too hot. When you can, exercise in an air-conditioned area.
- If you exercise outdoors, consider wearing a cooling vest or garment or keeping a cooling towel nearby.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Remember to stretch before and after exercising.
- Start slowly. Plan to progress at a pace that is comfortable.
- Allow time for rest breaks.

The National MS Society offers information about the benefits of exercise. Visit them at: **nationalmssociety.org.**

You might want to try different kinds of exercise. Swimming is especially good. It helps stretch tight muscles and promotes flexibility. It's also a great way to stay cool. (Just be careful not to exercise in water that is hotter than 84°F.) Walking and biking can make your muscles, heart, and lungs strong. Yoga, strength training (using weights), and resistance exercises (using stretchy bands) build your core muscles and help with balance.

To improve fitness, you only need to be moderately active for 150 minutes a week. Moderate activity is a level where you are slightly out of breath and might have some difficulty talking but can still do so. For more benefit, add in strength training twice a week. You can also build exercise into your daily routine. For instance, take the stairs instead of the elevator when you can. Try parking farther away from the front door of stores when you shop.

Talk to your doctor about how to start exercising. A physical therapist or trainer with MS experience can also help by designing a program that fits your needs and abilities. The key is to find something you can stay with. Remember that change happens in small steps. Be patient, listen to your body, and have fun!

Have more questions? Give your program nurse a call. Your nurse can help you plan an exercise program that will best suit your needs and help keep you strong.

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Preparing your action plan

Do you know what an "action plan" is? It is a written plan you make with your doctor to help control your MS. A good action plan should cover all aspects of your care, from tracking symptoms, to medicines and side effects, emergency plans, and doctor instructions. No matter the issue, a good action plan is there to guide you.

You can put just about anything you need in an action plan. Here are some things you might want to have in yours:

- Your doctor's phone number and how to reach your doctor after hours.
- Names and doses of all your medicine, even things you buy at the drug store like vitamins, herbal supplements, or aspirin.
- The names and phone numbers of any drug store or company where you get medicine or medical supplies.
- A list of problems that may happen with MS and what to do about them.
- Tips for managing MS at home, like when and how to take your medicine.
- An up-to-date schedule for the lab tests and vaccines you may need, such as flu and pneumonia shots.

Action plans can be made on a computer or be hand-written. It's also good to make many copies for yourself and others. The members of your care team—doctors, nurses, family, and friends—can help you best when they know about your care. Show your action plan to each of your doctors. Let them read it and talk about it with you. If you have several different doctors, this can help you get the best care possible.

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Care Connections℠

Myasthenia Gravis

FEBRUARY 2021

Exercise and MG

Exercise is one of the best things anyone can do for body and mind. It's no different when you have myasthenia gravis (MG). Physical activity helps you to feel more in control of your health. It also offers these benefits:

- Strong muscles
- Sturdy bones
- Better stamina—you can be active for longer periods
- Improved mood
- Good sleep
- Less risk for other diseases like diabetes and heart conditions
- Weight control

Talk to your doctor about the exercise you are most interested in doing. Consider trying these tips:

- Exercise at the time of day when you feel best. This will help save your energy.
- Avoid getting too hot. When you can, exercise in an air-conditioned area.
- If you exercise outdoors, consider either wearing a cooling vest or garment or keeping a cooling towel nearby.
- Make sure to get enough sleep at night.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Allow time for rest breaks.
- Consider exercising with a friend to help stay motivated.

You might want to try different kinds of exercise. Walking and biking can gently strengthen your muscles, heart, and lungs. Strength training (using weights), resistance exercises (using stretchy bands), and yoga are great for strengthening your core and improving balance.

To build fitness, you only need to be moderately active for about 150 minutes a week. Moderate activity is a level where you are slightly out of breath and might have some difficulty talking but can still do so. For more benefit, add in strength training twice a week. Avoid overdoing it. Plan to progress at a pace that is comfortable for you.

Talk to your doctor about how to start exercising. The key is to find something you can stay with. Remember that change happens in small steps. Be patient, listen to your body, and have fun!

Have more questions? Give your program nurse a call. Your nurse can help you plan an exercise program that will best suit your needs and help keep you strong.

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Preparing your action plan

Do you know what an "action plan" is? It is a written plan you make with your doctor to help control your MG. A good action plan should cover all aspects of your care, from tracking symptoms, to medicines and side effects, emergency plans, and doctor instructions. No matter the issue, a good action plan is there to guide you.

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- Names and doses of all your medicine, even things you buy at the drug store, like vitamins, herbal supplements, or aspirin.
- The names and phone numbers of any drug store or company where you get medicine or medical supplies.
- A list of problems that may happen with MG and what to do about them.
- Tips for managing MG at home, like when and how to take your medicine.
- An up-to-date schedule for the lab tests and vaccines you may need, such as flu and pneumonia shots.

Action plans can be made on a computer or written by hand. It's also good to make many copies for yourself and others. The members of your care team—doctors, nurses, family, and friends—can help you best when they know about your care. Show your action plan to each of your doctors. Let them read it and talk about it with you. This can help you get the best care possible.

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Myositis

FEBRUARY 2021

Exercise and myositis

Exercise is one of the best things anyone can do for body and mind. It's no different when you have myositis. Physical activity helps you to feel more in control of your health. It also offers these benefits:

- Strong muscles, heart, and lungs
- Better overall flexibility
- Improved mood and brain function
- Good sleep
- Less fatigue
- Less systemic inflammation
- Weight control (helpful if you are taking steroids)

Talk to your doctor about what exercise you are most interested in doing. Consider trying these tips:

- Manage fatigue by exercising when you have the most energy. Allow time for rest breaks.
- Remember to stretch before and after physical activity.
- Listen to your body. Progress at a pace that is comfortable.
- Start with low-intensity exercise and go up from there.
- Drink plenty of water.

You might want to try different kinds of exercise. Aerobic exercise is great for beating fatigue. Low-impact moves help protect your joints. Walking and biking can strengthen your muscles, bones, heart, and lungs. Yoga, strength training (at a weight that lets you do 10 reps), and resistance exercises (using stretchy bands) build your core and improve balance. Swimming promotes flexibility. Swimming in a heated pool is a great option if land-based exercises are painful.

To build fitness, you only need to be moderately active for 150 minutes a week. Moderate activity is a level where you are slightly out of breath and might have some difficulty talking but can still do so. If you want rest days in between, try exercising at least 3 days a week at 50% to 70% of maximum heart rate to boost aerobic fitness. If you can, add strength training 2 to 3 times a week. It's ok to do aerobics and strength training on the same day. This way, you can exercise some days and rest in between.

Talk to your doctor before starting to exercise. A physical therapist is another great resource. He or she can design a program that fits your strength, fatigue, and pain levels. The key is to find something you can stay with. Remember that change happens in small steps. Be patient, listen to your body, and have fun!

For more information about exercise and myositis, visit The Myositis Association web site at **www.myositis.org.**

Have more questions? Give your program nurse a call. Your nurse can help you plan an exercise program that will best suit your needs and help keep you strong.

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Preparing your action plan

Do you know what an "action plan" is? It is a written plan you make with your doctor to help control your myositis. A good action plan should cover all aspects of your care, from tracking symptoms, to medicines and side effects, emergency plans, and doctor instructions. No matter the issue, a good action plan is there to guide you.

You can put just about anything you need in an action plan. Here are some things you might want to have in yours:

- Your doctor's phone number and how to reach your doctor after hours.
- Names and doses of all your medicine, even things you buy at the drug store, like vitamins, herbal supplements, or aspirin.
- The names and phone numbers of any drug store or company where you get medicine or medical supplies.
- A list of problems that may happen with myositis and what to do about them.
- Tips for managing myositis at home, like when and how to take your medicine.
- An up-to-date schedule for the lab tests and vaccines you may need, such as a creatinine kinase (CK) level, as well as flu and pneumonia shots.

Action plans can be made on a computer or be hand-written. It's also good to make many copies for yourself and others. The members of your care team—doctors, nurses, family, and friends—can help you best when they know about your care. Show your action plan to each of your doctors. Let them read it and talk about it with you. If you have several different doctors, this can help you get the best care possible.

Need help getting started? Give your program nurse a call. Your nurse can show you sample action plans and help you write your own.

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Care Connections℠

Parkinson's Disease

FEBRUARY 2021

Exercise and PD

Exercise is one of the best things anyone can do for body and mind. It's no different when you have Parkinson's disease (PD). Physical activity helps you to feel more in control of your health. The earlier you start, the better your quality of life. It also offers these benefits:

- Strong muscles, heart, and lungs
- Better overall strength
- Greater mobility
- Improved mood and brain function
- Less feelings of isolation
- Less fatigue

Talk to your doctor about the exercise you are most interested in doing. Your doctor might also recommend therapy or local exercise programs. Some are designed specifically for PD. Consider trying these tips:

- Be safe. This includes having proper shoes that help you stay stable.
- Remember to stretch before and after exercising.
- Start slowly. Plan to progress at a pace that is comfortable.
- Allow time for rest breaks.
- Drink plenty of water.

You might want to try different kinds of exercise. Aerobic activities may slow PD. Depending on your PD, walking and biking might be good choices for making your muscles, heart, and lungs strong. Yoga, strength training (using weights), and resistance exercises (using stretchy bands) build your core muscles and improve balance. This can help prevent falls. Dancing is fun and social.

To improve fitness, you only need to be moderately active for 150 minutes per week. Moderate activity is a level where you are slightly out of breath and might have some difficulty talking but can still do so. For more benefit, add in strength training twice a week. You can also build exercise into your daily routine. For instance, take the stairs instead of the elevator when you can. Try parking farther away from the store entrance when you shop.

Talk to your doctor and/or specialist about how to start exercising. A physical therapist with PD experience can also help by designing a program that fits your needs and abilities. The key is to find something you can stay with. Remember that change happens in small steps. Be patient, listen to your body, and have fun!

Consider trying an exercise class geared for persons with PD. Contact the Parkinson's Foundation Helpline at 1-800-4PD-INFO or **helpline@parkinson.org** to find one near you.

Have more questions? Give your program nurse a call. Your nurse can help you plan an exercise program that will best suit your needs and help keep you strong.

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Preparing your action plan

Do you know what an “action plan” is? It is a written plan you make with your doctor to help control your PD. A good action plan should cover all aspects of your care, from tracking symptoms, to medicines and side effects, emergency plans, and doctor instructions. No matter the issue, a good action plan is there to guide you.

You can put just about anything you need in an action plan. Here are some things you might want to have in yours:

- Your doctor’s phone number and how to reach your doctor after hours.
- Names and doses of all your medicines, even things you buy at the drug store, like vitamins, herbal supplements, or aspirin.
- The names and phone numbers of any drug store or company where you get medicine or medical supplies.
- A list of problems that may happen with PD and what to do about them.
- Tips for managing PD at home, like when and how to take your medicine.
- An up-to-date schedule for the lab tests and vaccines you may need, such as flu and pneumonia shots.

Action plans can be made on a computer or hand-written. It’s also good to make many copies for yourself and others. The members of your care team—doctors, nurses, family, and friends—can help you best when they know about your care. Show your action plan to each of your doctors. Let them read it and talk about it with you. If you have several different doctors, this can help you get the best care possible.

Need help getting started? Give your program nurse a call. Your nurse can show you sample action plans and help you write your own.

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Care Connections℠

Rheumatoid Arthritis

FEBRUARY 2021

Exercise and RA

Exercise is one of the best things anyone can do for body and mind. It's no different when you have rheumatoid arthritis (RA). Physical activity helps you to feel more in control of your health. It also offers these benefits:

- Exercise strengthens the muscles around your joints. This will protect your joints and take the strain off of them.
- Better overall strength and mobility
- Improved mood and brain function
- Good sleep
- Less fatigue

Talk to your doctor about the exercise you are most interested in doing. Consider trying these tips:

- Drink plenty of water.
- Remember to stretch before and after exercising.
- Plan to progress at a pace that is comfortable. Start slowly.
- Allow time for rest breaks.
- Be careful about exercising during a flare.

You might want to try different kinds of exercise. Swimming is especially good. It helps stretch tight muscles and promotes flexibility. Water also takes some of the weight off your joints which can make it easier or more comfortable to move. Walking and biking can make your muscles, heart, and lungs strong. Resistance exercises (using stretchy bands) build your core muscles and improve balance.

Gentle movements that stretch your muscles and increase flexibility are the most important kind of exercises for RA. Exercises like yoga ease stiff limbs and help protect your joints from possible injury during exercise.

To improve fitness, you only need to be moderately active for 150 minutes per week. Moderate activity is a level where you are slightly out of breath and might have some difficulty talking but can still do so. For more benefit, add in strength training twice a week. You can also build exercise into your daily routine. For instance, take the stairs instead of the elevator when you can. Try parking farther away from the front door of stores when you shop.

Talk to your doctor about how to start exercising. A physical therapist or trainer with RA experience can also help by designing a program that fits your needs and abilities. The key is to find something you can stay with. Remember that change happens in small steps. Be patient, listen to your body, and have fun!

Have more questions? Give your program nurse a call. Your nurse can help you plan an exercise program that you can review with your doctor. This will best suit your needs and help keep you safe and strong.

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Preparing your action plan

Do you know what an "action plan" is? It is a written plan you make with your doctor to help control your RA. A good action plan should cover all aspects of your care, from tracking symptoms, to medicines and side effects, emergency plans, and doctor instructions. No matter the issue, a good action plan is there to guide you.

You can put just about anything you need in an action plan. Here are some things you might want to have in yours:

- Your doctor's phone number and how to reach your doctor after hours.
- Names and doses of all your medicine, even things you buy at the drug store, like vitamins, herbal supplements, or aspirin.
- The names and phone numbers of any drug store or company where you get medicine or medical supplies.
- A list of problems that may happen with RA and what to do about them.
- Tips for managing RA at home, like when and how to take your medicine.
- An up-to-date schedule for the lab tests and vaccines you may need, such as ESR and CRP tests and complete blood count, as well as flu and pneumonia shots.

Action plans can be made on a computer or be hand-written. It's also good to make many copies for yourself and others. The members of your care team—doctors, nurses, family, and friends—can help you best when they know about your care. Show your action plan to each of your doctors. Let them read it and talk about it with you. If you have several different doctors, this can help you get the best care possible.

Need help getting started? Give your program nurse a call. Your nurse can show you sample action plans and help you write your own.

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Care Connections℠

Scleroderma

FEBRUARY 2021

Exercise and scleroderma

Exercise is one of the best things anyone can do for body and mind. It's no different when you have scleroderma. Physical activity helps you to feel more in control of your health. It also offers these benefits:

- Strong muscles, heart, and lungs
- Better overall strength
- Improved mood and brain function
- Good sleep
- Less fatigue

Talk to your doctor about the exercise you are most interested in doing. Your doctor may have specific recommendations because of your scleroderma. He/she may recommend a physical therapist to start. Consider trying these tips:

- Avoid getting too hot. When you can, exercise in an air conditioned area.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Remember to stretch before and after exercising.
- Plan to progress at a pace that is comfortable. Start slowly.
- Allow time for rest breaks.

You might want to try different kinds of exercise. Swimming is especially good. It helps stretch tight muscles and promotes flexibility. It's also a great way to stay cool. Walking and biking can make your muscles, heart, and lungs strong. Yoga, strength training (using weights), and resistance exercises (using stretchy bands) build your core muscles and improve balance.

To improve fitness, you only need to be moderately active for 150 minutes per week. Moderate activity is a level where you are slightly out of breath and might have some difficulty talking but can still do so. For more benefit, add in strength training twice a week. You can also build exercise into your daily routine. For instance, take the stairs instead of the elevator when you can. Try parking farther away from the front door of stores when you shop.

Talk to your doctor about how to start exercising. A physical therapist or trainer with scleroderma experience can also help by designing a program that fits your needs and abilities. The key is to find something you can stay with. Remember that change happens in small steps. Be patient, listen to your body, and have fun!

Have more questions? Give your program nurse a call. Your nurse can help you plan an exercise program that will best suit your needs and help keep you strong.

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Preparing your action plan

Do you know what an "action plan" is? It is a written plan you make with your doctor to help control your scleroderma. A good action plan should cover all aspects of your care, from tracking symptoms, to medicines and side effects, emergency plans, and doctor instructions. No matter the issue, a good action plan is there to guide you.

You can put just about anything you need in an action plan. Here are some things you might want to have in yours:

- Your doctor's phone number and how to reach your doctor after hours.
- Names and doses of all your medicine, even things you buy at the drug store, like vitamins, herbal supplements, or aspirin.
- The names and phone numbers of any drug store or company where you get medicine or medical supplies.
- A list of problems that may happen with scleroderma and what to do about them.
- Tips for managing scleroderma at home, like when and how to take your medicine.
- An up-to-date schedule for the lab tests and vaccines you may need, such as screenings for lung, heart, and kidney problems, as well as flu and pneumonia shots.

Action plans can be made on a computer or be hand-written. It's also good to make many copies for yourself and others. The members of your care team—doctors, nurses, family, and friends—can help you best when they know about your care. Show your action plan to each of your doctors. Let them read it and talk about it with you. If you have several different doctors, this can help you get the best care possible.

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Sickle Cell

FEBRUARY 2021

Exercise and sickle cell disease

Exercise is one of the best things anyone can do for body and mind. It's no different when you have sickle cell disease. Physical activity helps you to feel more in control of your health. It also offers these benefits:

- Strong muscles, heart, and lungs
- Better overall strength
- Improved mood and brain function
- Good sleep
- Less fatigue

Talk to your doctor about the exercise you are most interested in doing. Consider trying these tips:

- Start slowly. Plan to progress at a pace that is comfortable and safe with your pain crisis trigger.
- Avoid getting too hot. When you can, exercise in an air conditioned area.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Remember to stretch before and after exercising.
- Allow time for rest breaks.

You might want to try different kinds of exercise. Swimming is especially good for you, but be careful. Do not hike at high altitudes or swim for a long time under water. These activities can cause red blood cells to sickle. Also, never push yourself to the point of exhaustion.

Walking and biking can make your muscles, heart, and lungs strong. Yoga, strength training (using weights), and resistance exercises (using stretchy bands) build your core muscles and improve balance. Sickle cell patients, especially those with an enlarged spleen, should avoid contact sports.

To improve fitness, you only need to be moderately active for 150 minutes per week. Moderate activity is a level where you are slightly out of breath and might have some difficulty talking but can still do so. For more benefit, add in strength training twice a week. You can also build exercise into your daily routine. For instance, take the stairs instead of the elevator when you can. Try parking farther away from the front door of stores when you shop.

Talk to your doctor about how to start exercising. A physical therapist or trainer with sickle cell experience can also help by designing a program that fits your needs and abilities. The key is to find something you can stay with. Remember that change happens in small steps. Be patient, listen to your body, and have fun!

Have more questions? Give your program nurse a call. Your nurse can help you plan an exercise program that will best suit your needs and help keep you strong.

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Preparing your action plan

Do you know what an "action plan" is? It is a written plan you make with your doctor to help control your sickle cell disease. A good action plan should cover all aspects of your care, from tracking symptoms, to medicines and side effects, emergency plans, and doctor instructions. No matter the issue, a good action plan is there to guide you.

You can put just about anything you need in an action plan. Here are some things you might want to have in yours:

- Your doctor's phone number and how to reach your doctor after hours.
- Names and doses of all your medicine, even things you buy at the drug store, like vitamins, herbal supplements, or aspirin.
- The names and phone numbers of any drug store or company where you get medicine or medical supplies.
- A list of problems that may happen with sickle cell and what to do about them.
- Tips for managing sickle cell at home, like when and how to take your medicine.
- An up-to-date schedule for the lab tests and vaccines you may need, such as urinalysis, eGFR (measures kidney function), and screenings for stroke and pulmonary hypertension, as well as flu and pneumonia shots.

Action plans can be made on a computer or be hand-written. It's also good to make many copies for yourself and others. The members of your care team—doctors, nurses, family, and friends—can help you best when they know about your care. Show your action plan to each of your doctors. Let them read it and talk about it with you. If you have several different doctors, this can help you get the best care possible.

Need help getting started? Give your program nurse a call. Your nurse can show you sample action plans and help you write your own.

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Care Connections℠

Epilepsy

FEBRUARY 2021

Exercise and epilepsy

Exercise is one of the best things anyone can do for body and mind. It's no different when you have epilepsy. Physical activity helps you to feel more in control of your health. It also offers these benefits:

- Strong muscles, heart, and lungs
- Better overall strength
- Improved mood and brain function
- Good sleep
- Less fatigue

Talk to your doctor about the exercise you are most interested in doing. Consider trying these tips:

- Avoid getting too hot. When you can, exercise in an air conditioned area.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Remember to stretch before and after exercising.
- Plan to progress at a pace that is comfortable. Start slowly.
- Allow time for rest breaks.

You might want to try different kinds of exercise. Walking and biking can make your muscles, heart, and lungs strong. Yoga, strength training (using weights), and resistance exercises (using stretchy bands) build your core muscles and improve balance.

WARNING: swimming exercises are high risk for those with epilepsy. If you swim in a pool, alert the lifeguard that you have epilepsy. Never swim alone. If your seizures are uncontrolled, swimming may not be a good exercise for you.

To improve fitness, you only need to be moderately active for 150 minutes per week. Moderate activity is a level where you are slightly out of breath and might have some difficulty talking but can still do so. For more benefit, add in strength training twice a week. You can also build exercise into your daily routine. For instance, take the stairs instead of the elevator when you can. Try parking farther away from the front door of stores when you shop.

Talk to your doctor about how to start exercising. A physical therapist or trainer with epilepsy experience can also help by designing a program that fits your needs and abilities. The key is to find something you can stay with. Remember that change happens in small steps. Be patient, listen to your body, and have fun!

Have more questions? Give your program nurse a call. Your nurse can help you plan an exercise program that will best suit your needs and help keep you strong.

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Preparing your action plan

Do you know what an “action plan” is? It is a written plan you make with your doctor to help control your epilepsy. A good action plan should cover all aspects of your care, from tracking symptoms, to medicines and side effects, emergency plans, and doctor instructions. No matter the issue, a good action plan is there to guide you.

You can put just about anything you need in an action plan. Here are some things you might want to have in yours:

- Your doctor’s phone number and how to reach your doctor after hours.
- Names and doses of all your medicine, even things you buy at the drug store, like vitamins, herbal supplements, or aspirin.
- The names and phone numbers of any drug store or company where you get medicine or medical supplies.
- A list of problems that may happen with epilepsy and what to do about them.
- A seizure diary for tracking the details of seizures, as well as possible triggers. If you don’t have one already, ask your program nurse for a sample seizure diary.
- Tips for managing epilepsy at home, like when and how to take your medicine.
- An up-to-date schedule for the lab tests and vaccines you may need, such as flu and pneumonia shots.

Action plans can be made on a computer or be hand-written. It’s also good to make many copies for yourself and others. The members of your care team—doctors, nurses, family, and friends—can help you best when they know about your care. Show your action plan to each of your doctors. Let them read it and talk about it with you. If you have several different doctors, this can help you get the best care possible.

Need help getting started? Give your program nurse a call. Your nurse can show you sample action plans and help you write your own.

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Care Connections℠

Crohn’s Disease

FEBRUARY 2021

Exercise and Crohn’s disease

Exercise is one of the best things anyone can do for body and mind. It’s no different when you have Crohn’s disease. Physical activity helps you to feel more in control of your health. It also offers these benefits:

- Strong muscles, heart, and lungs
- Better overall strength
- Improved mood and brain function
- Good sleep
- Less fatigue

Talk to your doctor about the exercise you are most interested in doing. Consider trying these tips:

- Avoid getting too hot. When you can, exercise in an air conditioned area.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Remember to stretch before and after exercising.
- Plan to progress at a pace that is comfortable. Start slowly.
- Allow time for rest breaks.

You might want to try different kinds of exercise. Swimming is especially good. It helps stretch tight muscles and promotes flexibility. It’s also a great way to stay cool. Walking and biking can make your muscles, heart, and lungs strong. Yoga, strength training (using weights), and resistance exercises (using stretchy bands) build your core muscles and improve balance.

To improve fitness, you only need to be moderately active for 150 minutes per week. Moderate activity is a level where you are slightly out of breath and might have some difficulty talking but can still do so. For more benefit, add in strength training twice a week. You can also build exercise into your daily routine. For instance, take the stairs instead of the elevator when you can. Try parking farther away from the front door of stores when you shop.

Talk to your doctor about how to start exercising. A physical therapist or trainer with Crohn’s experience can also help by designing a program that fits your needs and abilities. The key is to find something you can stay with. Remember that change happens in small steps. Be patient, listen to your body, and have fun!

Have more questions? Give your program nurse a call. Your nurse can help you plan an exercise program that will best suit your needs and help keep you strong.

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Preparing your action plan

Do you know what an “action plan” is? It is a written plan you make with your doctor to help control your Crohn’s disease. A good action plan should cover all aspects of your care, from tracking symptoms, to medicines and side effects, emergency plans, and doctor instructions. No matter the issue, a good action plan is there to guide you.

You can put just about anything you need in an action plan. Here are some things you might want to have in yours:

- Your doctor’s phone number and how to reach your doctor after hours.
- Names and doses of all your medicine, even things you buy at the drug store, like vitamins, herbal supplements, or aspirin.
- The names and phone numbers of any drug store or company where you get medicine or medical supplies.
- A list of problems that may happen with Crohn’s and what to do about them.
- Tips for managing Crohn’s at home, like when and how to take your medicine.
- An up-to-date schedule for the lab tests and vaccines you may need, such as colonoscopies and cancer screenings, as well as flu and pneumonia shots.

Action plans can be made on a computer or be hand-written. It’s also good to make many copies for yourself and others. The members of your care team—doctors, nurses, family, and friends—can help you best when they know about your care. Show your action plan to each of your doctors. Let them read it and talk about it with you. If you have several different doctors, this can help you get the best care possible.

Need help getting started? Give your program nurse a call. Your nurse can show you sample action plans and help you write your own.

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Care Connections℠

Ulcerative Colitis

FEBRUARY 2021

Exercise and UC

Exercise is one of the best things anyone can do for body and mind. It's no different when you have ulcerative colitis (UC). Physical activity helps you to feel more in control of your health. It also offers these benefits:

- Strong muscles, heart, and lungs
- Better overall strength
- Improved mood and brain function
- Good sleep
- Less fatigue

Talk to your doctor about the exercise you are most interested in doing. Consider trying these tips:

- Avoid getting too hot. When you can, exercise in an air conditioned area.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Remember to stretch before and after exercising.
- Plan to progress at a pace that is comfortable. Start slowly.
- Allow time for rest breaks.

You might want to try different kinds of exercise. Swimming is especially good. It helps stretch tight muscles and promotes flexibility. It's also a great way to stay cool. Walking and biking can make your muscles, heart, and lungs strong. Yoga, strength training (using weights), and resistance exercises (using stretchy bands) build your core muscles and improve balance.

To improve fitness, you only need to be moderately active for 150 minutes per week. Moderate activity is a level where you are slightly out of breath and might have some difficulty talking but can still do so. For more benefit, add in strength training twice a week. You can also build exercise into your daily routine. For instance, take the stairs instead of the elevator when you can. Try parking farther away from the front door of stores when you shop.

Talk to your doctor about how to start exercising. A physical therapist or trainer with UC experience can also help by designing a program that fits your needs and abilities. The key is to find something you can stay with. Remember that change happens in small steps. Be patient, listen to your body, and have fun!

Have more questions? Give your program nurse a call. Your nurse can help you plan an exercise program that will best suit your needs and help keep you strong.

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Preparing your action plan

Do you know what an "action plan" is? It is a written plan you make with your doctor to help control your UC. A good action plan should cover all aspects of your care, from tracking symptoms, to medicines and side effects, emergency plans, and doctor instructions. No matter the issue, a good action plan is there to guide you.

You can put just about anything you need in an action plan. Here are some things you might want to have in yours:

- Your doctor's phone number and how to reach your doctor after hours.
- Names and doses of all your medicine, even things you buy at the drug store, like vitamins, herbal supplements, or aspirin.
- The names and phone numbers of any drug store or company where you get medicine or medical supplies.
- A list of problems that may happen with UC and what to do about them.
- Tips for managing UC at home, like when and how to take your medicine.
- An up-to-date schedule for the lab tests and vaccines you may need, such as colonoscopies and cancer screenings, as well as flu and pneumonia shots.

Action plans can be made on a computer or be hand-written. It's also good to make many copies for yourself and others. The members of your care team—doctors, nurses, family, and friends—can help you best when they know about your care. Show your action plan to each of your doctors. Let them read it and talk about it with you. If you have several different doctors, this can help you get the best care possible.

Need help getting started? Give your program nurse a call. Your nurse can show you sample action plans and help you write your own.

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HIV

FEBRUARY 2021

Exercise and HIV

Exercise is one of the best things anyone can do for body and mind. It's no different when you have human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). Physical activity helps you to feel more in control of your health. It also offers these benefits:

- Strong muscles, heart, and lungs
- Better overall strength
- Improved mood and brain function
- Good sleep
- Less fatigue

Talk to your doctor about the exercise you are most interested in doing. Consider trying these tips:

- Avoid getting too hot. When you can, exercise in an air-conditioned area.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Remember to stretch before and after exercising.
- Plan to progress at a pace that is comfortable. Start slowly.
- Allow time for rest breaks.

You might want to try different kinds of exercise. Swimming is especially good. It helps stretch tight muscles and promotes flexibility. It's also a great way to stay cool. Walking and biking can make your muscles, heart, and lungs strong. Yoga, strength training (using weights), and resistance exercises (using stretchy bands) build your core muscles and improve balance.

To improve fitness, you only need to be moderately active for 150 minutes per week. Moderate activity is a level where you are slightly out of breath and might have some difficulty talking but can still do so. For more benefit, add in strength training twice a week. You can also build exercise into your daily routine. For instance, take the stairs instead of the elevator when you can. Try parking farther away from the front door of stores when you shop.

Talk to your doctor about how to start exercising. A physical therapist or trainer with HIV experience can also help by designing a program that fits your needs and abilities. The key is to find something you can stay with. Remember that change happens in small steps. Be patient, listen to your body, and have fun!

Have more questions? Give your program nurse a call. Your nurse can help you plan an exercise program that will best suit your needs and help keep you strong.

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Preparing your action plan

Do you know what an "action plan" is? It is a written plan you make with your doctor to help control your HIV. A good action plan should cover all aspects of your care, from tracking symptoms, to medicines and side effects, emergency plans, and doctor instructions. No matter the issue, a good action plan is there to guide you.

You can put just about anything you need in an action plan. Here are some things you might want to have in yours:

- Your doctor's phone number and how to reach your doctor after hours.
- Names and doses of all your medicine, even things you buy at the drug store, like vitamins, herbal supplements, or aspirin.
- The names and phone numbers of any drug store or company where you get medicine or medical supplies.
- A list of problems that may happen with HIV and what to do about them.
- Tips for managing HIV at home, like when and how to take your medicine.
- An up-to-date schedule for the lab tests and vaccines you may need, such as viral load and CD4 T cell count, as well as flu and pneumonia shots.

Action plans can be made on a computer or be hand-written. It's also good to make many copies for yourself and others. The members of your care team—doctors, nurses, family, and friends—can help you best when they know about your care. Show your action plan to each of your doctors. Let them read it and talk about it with you. If you have several different doctors, this can help you get the best care possible.

Need help getting started? Give your program nurse a call. Your nurse can show you sample action plans and help you write your own.

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Care Connections℠

Hereditary Angioedema

FEBRUARY 2021

Exercise and HAE

Exercise is one of the best things anyone can do for body and mind. It's no different when you have hereditary angioedema (HAE). Physical activity helps you to feel more in control of your health. It also offers these benefits:

- Strong muscles, heart, and lungs
- Better overall strength
- Improved mood and brain function
- Good sleep
- Less fatigue

Talk to your doctor about the exercise you are most interested in doing. Consider trying these tips:

- Avoid getting too hot. When you can, exercise in an air conditioned area.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Remember to stretch before and after exercising.
- Plan to progress at a pace that is comfortable. Start slowly.
- Allow time for rest breaks.

You might want to try different kinds of exercise. Walking and biking can make your muscles, heart, and lungs strong. Yoga, strength training (using weights), and resistance exercises (using stretchy bands) build your core muscles and improve balance.

To improve fitness, you only need to be moderately active for 150 minutes per week. Moderate activity is a level where you are slightly out of breath and might have some difficulty talking but can still do so. For more benefit, add in strength training twice a week. You can also build exercise into your daily routine. For instance, take the stairs instead of the elevator when you can. Try parking farther away from the front door of stores when you shop.

Talk to your doctor about how to start exercising. A physical therapist or trainer with HAE experience can also help by designing a program that fits your needs and abilities. The key is to find something you can stay with. Remember that change happens in small steps. Be patient, listen to your body, and have fun!

Have more questions? Give your program nurse a call. Your nurse can help you plan an exercise program that will best suit your needs and help keep you strong.

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Preparing your action plan

Do you know what an "action plan" is? It is a written plan you make with your doctor to help control your HAE. A good action plan should cover all aspects of your care, from tracking symptoms, to medicines and side effects, emergency plans, and doctor instructions. No matter the issue, a good action plan is there to guide you.

You can put just about anything you need in an action plan. Here are some things you might want to have in yours:

- Your doctor's phone number and how to reach your doctor after hours.
- Names and doses of all your medicine, even things you buy at the drug store, like vitamins, herbal supplements, or aspirin.
- The names and phone numbers of any drug store or company where you get medicine or medical supplies.
- A list of problems that may happen with HAE and what to do about them.
- Tips for managing HAE at home, like when and how to take your medicine.
- An up-to-date schedule for the lab tests and vaccines you may need, such as flu and pneumonia shots.
- A symptom diary for keeping track of HAE attacks.

Action plans can be made on a computer or be hand-written. It's also good to make many copies for yourself and others. The members of your care team—doctors, nurses, family, and friends—can help you best when they know about your care. Show your action plan to each of your doctors. Let them read it and talk about it with you. If you have several different doctors, this can help you get the best care possible.

Need help getting started? Give your program nurse a call. Your nurse can show you sample action plans and help you write your own.

This CareConnections newsletter was reviewed for medical accuracy by Andrew Krueger, MD, FACP. The CareConnections newsletter and the Accordant website are for your information. The information given in this newsletter was correct to the best of our knowledge at the time of printing.References available upon request. We may talk about medicines, products or services offered by companies that are not a part of Accordant's services. We are not paid by these companies and we do not make promises about their medicines, products or services. Also, Accordant does not offer treatment, accept payment from or endorse other websites. The CareConnections newsletter and Accordant website do not replace your doctor's medical advice. Always talk to your doctor before making any changes in your medications or other treatment. Visit our website for the full Terms of Use. Your health plan benefits may or may not pay for the medicines, products or services that we talk about in CareConnections. Contact your health plan's customer service department to talk about your benefits. You may copy or print this newsletter for other people as long as you don't receive any kind of payment for it and the copyright notice is displayed. You may not change any article or remove the copyright notice. If you have comments or suggestions, send a letter to the address below or an email to editor@accordant.net. If we sent this newsletter to you in error, please accept our apology. Call the phone number listed above if you want Accordant to stop sending these newsletters to you. You can also write "remove frommailing list" on this newsletter and return it to us. Your privacy is important to us. Our employees are trained regarding the appropriate way to handle your private health information.

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Care Connections℠

Chronic Kidney Disease

FEBRUARY 2021

Exercise and CKD

Exercise is one of the best things anyone can do for body and mind. It's no different when you have chronic kidney disease (CKD). Physical activity helps you to feel more in control of your health. It also offers these benefits:

- Strong muscles, heart, and lungs
- Better overall strength
- Improved mood and brain function
- Good sleep
- Less fatigue

Talk to your doctor about the exercise you are most interested in doing. Consider trying these tips:

- Avoid getting too hot. When you can, exercise in an air conditioned area.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Remember to stretch before and after exercising.
- Plan to progress at a pace that is comfortable. Start slowly.
- Allow time for rest breaks.

You might want to try different kinds of exercise. Swimming may be good if you do not have any catheters in place. It helps stretch tight muscles and promotes flexibility. It's also a great way to stay cool. Walking and biking can make your muscles, heart, and lungs strong. Yoga, strength training (using weights), and resistance exercises (using stretchy bands) build your core muscles and improve balance.

To improve fitness, you only need to be moderately active for 150 minutes per week. Moderate activity is a level where you are slightly out of breath and might have some difficulty talking but can still do so. For more muscle fitness, add in strength training twice a week. You can also build exercise into your daily routine. For instance, take the stairs instead of the elevator when you can. Try parking farther away from the front door of stores when you shop.

Talk to your doctor about how to start exercising. A physical therapist or trainer with CKD experience can also help by designing a program that fits your needs and abilities. The key is to find something you can stay with. Remember that change happens in small steps. Be patient, listen to your body, and have fun!

Have more questions? Give your program nurse a call. Your nurse can help you plan an exercise program that will best suit your needs and help keep you strong.

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Preparing your action plan

Do you know what an "action plan" is? It is a written plan you make with your doctor to help control your chronic kidney disease. A good action plan should cover all aspects of your care, from tracking symptoms, to medicines and side effects, emergency plans, and doctor instructions. No matter the issue, a good action plan is there to guide you.

You can put just about anything you need in an action plan. Here are some things you might want to have in yours:

- Your doctor's phone number and how to reach your doctor after hours.
- Names and doses of all your medicine, even things you buy at the drug store, like vitamins, herbal supplements, or aspirin.
- The names and phone numbers of any drug store or company where you get medicine or medical supplies.
- A list of problems that may happen with kidney disease and what to do about them.
- Tips for managing kidney disease at home, like when and how to take your medicine.
- An up-to-date schedule for the lab tests and vaccines you may need, such as eGFR and albumin, as well as flu and pneumonia shots.

Action plans can be made on a computer or be hand-written. It's also good to make many copies for yourself and others. The members of your care team—doctors, nurses, family, and friends—can help you best when they know about your care. Show your action plan to each of your doctors. Let them read it and talk about it with you. If you have several different doctors, this can help you get the best care possible.

Need help getting started? Give your program nurse a call. Your nurse can show you sample action plans and help you write your own.

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Care Connections℠

Primary Immunodeficiency

FEBRUARY 2021

Exercise and PI

Exercise is one of the best things anyone can do for body and mind. It's no different when you have primary immunodeficiency (PI). Physical activity helps you to feel more in control of your health. It also offers these benefits:

- Strong muscles, heart, and lungs
- Better overall strength
- Improved mood and brain function
- Less fatigue

Speak with your doctor(s) about what kinds of exercise are best for you. This can vary with the type of PI you have. For example:

- Contact sports may not be a good idea for boys with Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome who have a low platelet count. This means there is a higher risk of bleeding.
- If you have chronic granulomatous disease, talk to your doctor before you swim in the ocean or fresh water.

Here are some tips to think about:

- Plan to go at a comfortable pace. Start slowly.
- Exercise when you have the most energy. Allow time for rest breaks.
- If you go to a gym, wipe down equipment before and after using it and/or cover the pads with a towel to guard against skin infection.
- Make sure to wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before and after exercising. (Do this especially if you exercise at a gym, studio, or other public place.)
- No access to soap and water? Use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol instead.
- Avoid exercising in a crowd during outbreaks of flu or other population-based infections.

You might want to try different kinds of exercise. Activities like swimming, biking, running, and walking improve lung function, endurance, and overall fitness. Strength training tones your muscles. Yoga builds your core and improves balance.

To improve fitness, you only need to be moderately active for 150 minutes per week. Moderate activity is a level where you are slightly out of breath and might have some difficulty talking but can still do so. For more benefit, add in strength training twice a week. You can also build exercise into your daily routine. Take the stairs instead of the elevator when you can. Try parking farther away from the front door of stores when you shop.

Talk to your doctor before you start exercising. A physical therapist is another great resource. They can suggest exercises that are best for you. This includes things you can do at home. The key is to find something you can stay with. Remember that change happens in small steps. Be patient, listen to your body, and have fun!

Have more questions? Give your program nurse a call. Your nurse can help you plan an exercise program that will best suit your needs and help keep you strong.

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Preparing your action plan

Do you know what an "action plan" is? It is a written plan you make with your doctor to help control your PI. A good action plan should cover all aspects of your care, from tracking symptoms, to medicines and side effects, emergency plans, and doctor instructions. No matter the issue, a good action plan is there to guide you.

You can put just about anything you need in an action plan. Here are some things you might want to have in yours:

- Your doctor's phone number and how to reach your doctor after hours.
- Names and doses of all your medicine, even things you buy at the drug store, like vitamins, herbal supplements, or aspirin.
- The names and phone numbers of any drug store or company where you get medicine or medical supplies.
- A list of problems that may happen with PI and what to do about them.
- Tips for managing PI at home, like when and how to take your medicine.
- An up-to-date schedule for the lab tests and vaccines you may need, such as a white blood cell count, as well as flu and pneumonia shots.

Action plans can be made on a computer or be hand-written. It's also good to make many copies for yourself and others. The members of your care team—doctors, nurses, family, and friends—can help you best when they know about your care. Show your action plan to each of your doctors. Let them read it and talk about it with you. If you have several different doctors, this can help you get the best care possible.

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