

## Physical Activity Before Surgery

Studies show that patients who are active even just a few weeks before having surgery can recover quicker and possibly decrease complications after surgery.

Physical activity includes aerobic activity, such as walking or running, and muscle-strengthening exercises, which use resistance bands, hand weights or your body weight. Your weekly exercise plan should include both of these types of activities. Use the guide below to create your own exercise plan. Talk with your physician about your plan to make sure it is right for you.

### Aerobic activity

You can choose moderate or vigorous physical activities.

#### ***Moderate physical activities***

You should be able to talk while doing moderate physical activities. Examples include:

- Walking briskly
- Biking on level ground
- Sports, such as baseball or tennis (doubles)
- Ballroom dancing
- Water aerobics

*Aim for 30 to 60 minutes each day and 5 days per week, or a total of 150 to 300 minutes per week.*

#### ***Vigorous physical activities***

You should only be able to say a few words while doing vigorous physical activities.

Examples include:

- Running or jogging
- Biking faster than 10 miles per hour
- Sports, such as basketball or soccer
- Aerobic dance, such as Zumba®
- Jumping rope

*Aim for a total of 75 to 150 minutes each week and at least 10 minutes at a time.*

## Muscle-strengthening exercises

Choose exercises that target these major muscle groups in your body:

- Legs
- Back
- Chest
- Arms
- Stomach
- Shoulders
- Hips

Choose 5 different muscle-strengthening exercises in each exercise session. Examples include:

- Lifting weights, such as biceps curls and shoulder presses
- Resistance bands
- Climbing stairs
- Walking uphill
- Pushups and pullups
- Situps
- Squats

Do 1 set of 8 to 12 repetitions of each exercise per session.

*Aim for 30 minutes each day and at least 2 days per week.*

## Helpful tips

- You can exercise at home, at the gym, or even outside, as weather permits.
- Warm up and cool down. Start and end each session by walking slowly for 5 minutes. This helps your muscles, joints and heart prepare for exercise and helps prevent soreness afterward.
- Wear comfortable and properly fitted shoes for exercise. Shock-absorbent and skid-proof shoes, such as sneakers, are best.
- As you become stronger, try adding more intensity to your muscle-strengthening exercises by doing 2 sets of 8 to 12 repetitions of each exercise per session.
- It's OK to start small! Do what you can. You will get health benefits from even 5 minutes of physical activity each day.

## More resources

- For help making physical activity part of your daily life:  
**[cdc.gov/physicalactivity/basics/adding-pa/barriers.html](https://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/basics/adding-pa/barriers.html)**
- For help setting weekly goals and choosing your activities:  
**[health.gov/moveyourway/activity-planner](https://www.health.gov/moveyourway/activity-planner)**
- Digital apps: **MyFitnessPal, 7-Minute Workout and MapMyFitness**

