

Physical Activity & Chronic Conditions



Factsheet for People Living with Dementia and Care Partners

In this factsheet, you will learn about:



Benefits of Exercise for Chronic Health Conditions



Getting Active with Chronic Conditions

Key ideas:

- Physical activity reduces the risk of chronic health conditions and can improve symptoms for those who live with them.
- There may be additional considerations before starting exercise if you live with a chronic health condition.

Physical activity reduces risk of many health conditions

Physical activity improves fitness and daily function. Physical activity can also reduce risk and improve outcomes of many chronic health conditions:

- **Heart health** – Staying active can reduce blood pressure and decrease risk of a heart attack or stroke. Exercise can also speed recovery.
- **Bone health** – weight-bearing exercise can strengthen bones to reduce the risk or severity of osteoporosis.
- **Diabetes** – physical activity can reduce the risk of diabetes. Exercise can also help manage diabetes by helping to control blood sugar.
- **Cancer** – physical activity reduces risk of several types of cancers and supports recovery following treatment.

Let's talk more about how to get active safely if you have a chronic health condition.

Getting started safely with a chronic health condition

- If you have a chronic health condition, you should talk to a physician before taking up exercise.
- Your physician will be able to recommend the types and difficulty of exercise that is safe for you, in consideration of your health and medications.
- Starting slowly and progressing over time may be particularly important. Take time to warm-up and cool-down properly to help your body better adapt to exercise.
- Consider finding an exercise professional trained to help people with chronic health conditions. Specialized programs targeted to a health condition may be helpful to get started.

Before getting started:

- What are your health and wellness goals?
- Do you have any chronic health conditions you want to manage?
- How can physical activity help you achieve these goals?



Notes, reflections, and goals:

