

# Your Home Exercise Program



Allina Health



## Exercise Instructions

Exercise at a level that you would describe as “fairly light” to “somewhat hard.”

- Gradually increase your exercise every day by 1 to 3 minutes as you can tolerate.
- Your goal is to work toward a total of 30 to 45 minutes of nonstop exercise most days.
- Every person has a different response to exercise. You may not be able to exercise for a full 30 minutes at one time. You may need to continue to exercise for 10 to 15 minutes two to three times a day.
- Record your exercise in the chart on the next pages.



Exercise  
1 to 15 min.  
3 times/day.

Exercise  
15 to 20 min.  
2 times/day.

Exercise  
30 to 45 min.  
1 time/day.

Date	Morning	Afternoon
<i>example</i>	5 minutes	5 minutes
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
11		
12		
13		
14		
15		
16		
17		
18		
19		
20		



<b>Evening</b>	<b>Comments</b>
5 minutes	short of breath

## Exercise Guidelines

- Exercise when you are feeling rested.
- Do not exercise right after eating. Wait for 1 or 2 hours after a meal.
- If you get tired, stop and sit down to rest.
- Wear comfortable shoes with good support.
- Exercise indoors during hot and humid weather or windy and cold weather.
- Warm up and cool down before and after exercise by completing 5 minutes of slower paced walking or biking. Stretch after your cool down.
- If you are planning to exercise in the early morning hours, remember to take your medicines at least 30 minutes before.
- Do not exercise if you are ill or have a fever.

## If You Choose to Bike

If you had an angiogram, angioplasty, stent or atherectomy: do not use a bike for at least 7 days. Start with little or no resistance. Gradually increase as you can tolerate.

If you had open heart surgery and have a chest incision, do not use a bike with arm movements until your doctor says it's OK.

## When You Should Stop Exercising

As you are exercising, stop and rest if you have any of the following:

- dizziness or lightheadedness
- nausea (upset stomach) and vomiting (throwing up)
- cold sweat
- shortness of breath, making conversation difficult
- exhaustion or unusual fatigue
- feeling as if your heart is suddenly racing or pounding
- chest pain/pressure in your teeth, arm, jaw, ear, neck, or between your shoulder blades.

If the symptoms do not go away after resting, or if they keep reoccurring, call your doctor. Use nitroglycerin as directed. If you feel no relief, call 911. Do not drive yourself.

## Activity Guidelines

- Balance your activity with rest throughout the day during your recovery.
- Avoid activities that require you to hold your breath. Keep breathing normally.
- Avoid straining during a bowel movement.
- Climb stairs slowly and avoid carrying heavy items.
- Avoid activities that require you to reach above shoulder level or stoop for more than a couple of minutes at one time.
- Follow any lifting restrictions you received.

## Check How Hard You Work

Once you start a physical activity, you should check how hard you are working. This is called the rate of perceived exertion (RPE). It is based on the total amount of exertion and physical fatigue you feel during an activity.

Use the Borg RPE scale® to help you determine your activity level.

### Borg RPE Scale

6	No exertion at all
7	
8	Extremely light
9	Very light
10	
11	Light
12	
13	Somewhat hard
14	
15	Hard (heavy)
16	
17	Very hard
18	
19	Extremely hard
20	Maximal exertion

Borg-RPE-skalan®  
© Gunnar Borg, 1970, 1985, 1994, 1998

The scale with correct instructions can be obtained from Borg Perception,  
see the home page: [www.borgperception.se/index.html](http://www.borgperception.se/index.html).



# Breathing Exercises

## Pursed-lip Breathing

Think of this as an exercise to control your breathing. It forces out the old air so you can take in new air that has fresh oxygen.

- When doing an activity, think about breathing through pursed lips during the hardest part of your activity.
- To do pursed-lip breathing:
  - Inhale (breathe in) through your nose with your mouth closed. (Breathe through your mouth if you are having trouble.)
  - Exhale (breathe out) through your mouth with your lips pursed (puckered). Blow out the air slowly.
  - Exhale twice as long as you inhale. For example, inhale to the count of 2 and exhale to the count of 4.

Pursed-lip breathing is used with all other breathing exercises. Practice it before doing other breathing techniques.



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**Pursed-lip breathing looks like you are blowing out a candle.**

## Diaphragm Breathing

Diaphragm breathing will help to strengthen your diaphragm. Do this every day so it will become your normal breathing pattern.

To find your diaphragm, put your hand flat over the center of your stomach at the base of your breastbone and sniff. You will feel your diaphragm move. There are two types of diaphragm breathing:

### ■ front expansion

- Lie down on your back with your knees bent. Place one pillow under your head and one under your knees.
- Place one hand on your upper chest and your left hand over the center of your stomach at the base of your breastbone.
- Exhale slowly through pursed lips while drawing your stomach muscles in.
- Inhale slowly. Your stomach should expand out. Your hand over your diaphragm should feel this movement.

### ■ side expansion

- Sit in a comfortable position with good posture. Place your hands on your sides at the base of your ribs.
- Breathe out slowly through pursed lips. Your ribs should move in.
- Breathe in slowly and let your ribs expand out against your hands.

Practice combining each of these exercises. Be sure to rest after three to four deep breaths so you don't become lightheaded. You will need to master both pursed-lip and diaphragm breathing before going on to other exercises.





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