

# Exercise For Life

The following pages are a tool for you to use to help you establish a regular exercise program. The key is to start today, so that by the time you finish Cardiac Rehab you already have a home or community exercise routine established.

## Step 1: Your Personal Benefits of Exercise

Knowing *why* you exercise is an important part of developing your plan and sticking to it. Review these possible benefits of exercise. Indicate the ones that are important to you. Be sure these are the real reasons you want to exercise, not why others have said you should exercise. You won't make changes that last unless the motivation comes from within.

Part A - If you become more physically active, do you believe you will:

	Yes	Somewhat	No
Improve your health?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improve your self confidence?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meet new people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lose weight/inches?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Build muscle strength?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feel more relaxed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improve your fitness level?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improve your mood?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perform tasks (at home or work) better?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improve your mobility?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improve your bone density?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improve flexibility, balance or coordination?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prevent future health problems?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part B - In your own words, list 3 reasons why exercise is important to you

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The longer you are active, the more benefits you will enjoy. And the **more** benefits you enjoy, the **more** likely you are to stay active for a lifetime.

*(Adapted with thanks from Educational Kits from Intervent Canada, University of Ottawa Heart Institute, Minto Prevention and Rehabilitation Centre material)*

# ***Exercise For Life***

## **Step 2: Possible Barriers To Exercise**

*Part A* - Indicate which of these statements matches your feelings about possible barriers to increasing your physical activity. Be honest in your answers.

	Yes	Somewhat	No
“I feel self conscious about how I look when I exercise”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
“I don’t enjoy any type of exercise”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
“I don’t know how to exercise/how hard to push myself”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
“I don’t have the self discipline”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
“I can’t find the time”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
“I don’t have someone to exercise with”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
“I don’t get any enjoyment from physical activity”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
“I’ve tried before and not succeeded”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
“I’m worried I will be too tired”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
“I don’t have the right clothes”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
“I don’t see the value in it”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
“The weather stops me from exercising when I want to”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
“I don’t have the equipment I need”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
“I’m not in good enough health/in too much pain”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
“I start, but I fall off the wagon regularly”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*Part B* - Write down the barriers you identified above that may prevent you from exercising regularly. Try to think of ways to overcome each one.

<b><i>Example Barriers Or Problems</i></b>	<b><i>Example Ways To Overcome</i></b>
I’m too tired to exercise	Start out at a slow pace
I don’t have time	Short walk during my lunch break
<b><i>My Personal Barriers</i></b>	<b><i>Ways To Overcome?</i></b>

# ***Exercise For Life***

## **Step 3: Setting Yourself Up For Success**

*Part A* - Play to your strengths and examine what encourages you to exercise;

- Are you a Self Starter type?
  1. Exercise independently
  2. Do it because they enjoy the activity
  3. Prefer an individual activity like biking, hiking, weight training
  4. Are organized, have their gear ready ahead of time
  
- Are you a Socialite type?
  1. Prefer groups such as aerobics, aquafit, tai ch'i, team sports
  2. Use friends to motivate them
  3. May exercise to improve appearance
  4. Use exercise as a source of fun
  
- Are you a Competitor type?
  1. Work better with a training goal, or a performance milestone.
  2. Will exercise if it helps them improve at a particular skill ("I will exercise if it improves my golf game")
  3. Generally like a lot of variety in their training program.

*Part B* - Which of the following are you doing to help keep yourself on track?

- Set goals: Set a daily, short term, long term and even a dream goal.
- Consider the weather - It may work better to have different exercise goals for warm and cold months. In our region, you need indoor exercise alternatives for both the extreme hot and cold days.
- Monitor yourself - Use a pedometer/activity tracker/fit bit to measure your activity through the day. Measure the speed or distance of your walk. Count the number of rests you take.
- Keep track - Write down your exercise on a calendar, phone app or activity log.
- Include friends or family - as exercise partners, or as someone to touch base with regularly - you will both benefit!
- Reward yourself - Treat yourself when you meet goals and reach milestones. Plan your reward ahead of time so it motivates you!
- Identify barriers and temptations - before you start any new activity, consider what may derail you so you can actively work to eliminate it. When barriers occur, change your plan accordingly. Adapt and overcome, don't just keep trying something that's not working!

# Exercise For Life

## Step 4: Make a Plan - S.M.A.R.T. Goal Setting

*Current exercise:* What are you doing for exercise now, outside of Cardiac Rehab?

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*General Exercise Goal:* \_\_\_\_\_

**SPECIFIC:** The more exact your goal is, the better it is. Identify what you want to do, where, when (what day, what time) and with whom? \_\_\_\_\_

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**MEASURABLE:** Include a number (ie. how far, how often, how much). That way you know you reached your goal. \_\_\_\_\_

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**ATTAINABLE:** Break big goals up into several smaller ones. What is the *first* step?

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Then map out a plan of how you plan to progress from there;

	What (type of exercise)	When	Where
This week			
Next week			
3rd week			

**REALISTIC:** It is easy to be tripped up by obstacles. Trouble shooting them ahead of time makes it more likely you will attain your goal on the first attempt.

Possible Barrier

Solution or Change to the Plan

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**TIMELINE:** Set a target date, and then tell someone or write it down. Then set a reward. \_\_\_\_\_

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*Weather:* It may be necessary to have different exercise goals for the summer and winter months. In our region, you sometimes need to have an indoor exercise option.

*Summer Options*

*Winter Options*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Long Term Goals:* Make a goal for what sort of exercise you would like to be doing regularly 6 months from now: \_\_\_\_\_

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Meet new people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lose weight/inches off your waist?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Build muscle strength?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feel more relaxed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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*Summer Options*

*Winter Options*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Long Term Goals:* Make a goal for what sort of exercise you would like to be doing regularly 6 months from now: \_\_\_\_\_



*Part A* - You should include *aerobic* exercise in any program designed to keep your heart healthy.

Aerobic exercise;

- uses large muscles and can be performed continuously
- raises heart rate
- burns calories and is critical to losing fat and keeping it off
- strengthens your heart and makes it more efficient

Aim for 150 minutes a week of aerobic exercise. Many studies recommend 400 minutes a week for maximum health benefits. Your long term goal should be to be able to exercise for 30-60 minutes without stopping - including time for warm up and cool down. However, while you are building up to this, sessions of as little as 10 minutes can be added up throughout the day.

Strength, balance or stretching exercises may also help you reach your specific goals.