

Aerobic Training: Progression

The basics:

All people, including those with Parkinson's disease (PD), **should exercise at least 150 minutes of aerobic exercise per week at a moderate intensity**. This type of exercise could include quick walking at home, or exercise in a gym setting. At the gym, you can use equipment such as a bike, treadmill or pool. Vigorous exercise may be even better than moderate intensity exercise. Strengthening, balance, and flexibility exercise are also important for people with PD. If you can exercise even more, there are added benefits to exercising 300 minutes/week.

Consider:

When starting a new exercise routine, you should work with your physician or physical therapist about any pain or other medical concerns to make sure it is safe for you to exercise. You should also work with your physician if you have any dizziness, chest pain, difficulty breathing or other concerning signs. You should contact your provider if you notice changes in your walking or balance that could affect your safety.

Warm up: Warm up time varies from 3-15 minutes. A warm up consists of an activity at a lower intensity or slower speed than your training program.

Training parameters: 150 minutes/week at moderate-vigorous intensity as measured by a heart rate (HR) range or an intensity rating scale. Examples:

- 3 times/week for 50 minutes each session OR 7 times/week for 23 minutes/day

How to progress training: Initially, you will progress by working in a greater HR range or at a greater intensity rating. As you continue, you will have to find ways to challenge yourself to stay in that range. Ways to challenge intensity include:

- Increasing speed, while maintaining good movements and safety.
- Add in an uphill climb.
- Add a challenging surface or a balance challenge.
- Add resistance (hand or ankle weights).
- Contact your therapist or work with a trainer to continue to challenge yourself.



Cool Down: Cool down for 10 minutes. A cool down consists of an activity at a lower intensity or slower speed than your training program

Return to PT: It is recommended that you see your physical therapist for regular check-ins every 6-12 months to monitor and progress your exercise. If a change occurs in your walking, balance, or fatigue with exercise, you can reach out to your PT sooner by calling 312-238-1000 to reconnect.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

How to I measure intensity?



Measuring your Heart Rate (HR)

- **Feel it on your wrist or neck with index and middle finger.**
 - Hold and count heart beats for 15 seconds
 - Multiply by 4
 - Normal resting HR= 60-100 beats per minute (bpm)
- **Use Technology**
 - Watch or wrist sensor
 - Finger pulse oximeter
 - Chest strap
 - Hold onto sensors on an exercise machine



Rate the Intensity

* Use an Intensity Rating Scale

6	No Exertion	
7		
8		
9	Very Light	
10		
11	Light	
12		Moderate Intensity Exercise
13	Somewhat Hard	
14		
15	Hard (Heavy)	Vigorous Exercise
16		
17	Very Hard	
18		
19		
20	Maximal	

* Talk Test

Moderate	Vigorous
You can talk, but not sing	You can say a few words, but then need to take a breath

Can I have examples of exercise?

AT LEAST 10 MINUTES AT A TIME	
Moderate	High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brisk Walking (>3mph) • Water Aerobics • Bicycling • Ballroom/Aerobic Dancing • Yoga • Strength Training • Boxing • Golf (walking) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race Walking (> 5mph) • Jogging or Running • Swimming Steady Laps • Bicycling (>10 mph) • Step Aerobics • Fast Paced Elliptical • Circuit Weight Training • Competitive Basketball

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