



EXERCISE INSTRUCTIONS

Pacemakers & Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillators (ICDs)

Always follow the advice of your provider (doctor/nurse practitioner/physician assistant). The instructions below are general and should only be done with their approval.

General Guidelines

Target Heart Rate (HR) will not exceed 150 beats per min (bpm) for most patients. Ask your doctor about heart rate and your pacemaker/ICD parameters.

- Warm-up: 5-10 minutes
- Aerobic: 20-45 minutes continuous exercise (use RPE – see back page).
- Weight training: 10-20 minutes
- Cool-down: 5-10 minutes
- Stretching: Up to 5 minutes of light stretching

Warm-up

Easy/light movement that prepares your muscles for the aerobic and/or weight training exercise.

Aerobic

- Done most days of the week.
- Uses large muscle groups working together.
- *Vigorous upper body workouts should be avoided.*
- Should cause an increase in heart rate (HR) and breathing rate, but you should still be able to carry on a conversation.
- Examples: walking, swimming, biking, and using a Nustep®.

If unable to perform 20 minutes of continuous exercise, try interval training.

- Continuous exercise - exercise at the same pace for entire time
- Interval Training - vary exercise with easier to harder segments, for example:
 - walk at a comfortable pace for 3 minutes
 - then try increasing speed or elevation for up to 1 minute,
 - then return back to original pace for another 3 minutes
 - repeat as tolerated.

Weight Training

- Aim for high repetitions (reps) with light weights 2-3 days per week,
- Start with 1 set of 15 reps per muscle group (legs, back, chest, shoulders, arms)
- Progress by increasing to 2-3 sets of 15 reps as tolerated.
- Strength training should only be performed after some form of cardiovascular/aerobic warm-up.
- Be sure to breathe out on the exertional part of the exercise
- **Note:** it is not safe to do isometric training (pushing against a fixed object or a high resistance without movement) at this time.

Cool-down

Similar to the warm-up; light movement to help bring your heart rate (HR) back down to its resting level.

Stretching

- Stretching decreases muscle soreness and increases flexibility.
- Done after every workout session.
- Hold stretch up to 30 seconds (as tolerated) without moving, and be sure to keep breathing.

PRECAUTIONS

- Your physician should clear you before you start an exercise program.
- Exercise may result in fluid loss (dehydration) so drink fluids to prevent low blood pressure after exercise. Patients on fluid restriction should ask for more specific advice from physician.
- Do not participate in any contact sports (football, wrestling, etc.).
- Heavy weight lifting is discouraged.

WHEN TO CALL & WHO TO CALL

If you have any of these symptoms before or during exercise, stop exercise immediately and contact your physician:

- Chest pain
- Shortness of breath
- Lightheadedness, or
- Anything that feels different than usual.

RATING OF PERCEIVED EXERTION (RPE)

Use this scale to find the intensity level of your exercise. A rating of 11-13 is ideal.

6	
7	Very, Very Light
8	
9	Very Light
10	
11	Fairly Light
12	
13	Somewhat Hard
14	
15	Hard
16	
17	Very Hard
18	
19	Very, Very Hard
20	

For questions about exercise, call the exercise physiologists at:

Cardiovascular Center

734-936-5627

Cardiovascular Medicine at Domino's Farms

734-998-5666 or 647-7321

Developed by Preventive Cardiology, UMHS.