

Exercise Instructions: Stroke

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

Warm-up	10-15 minutes
Aerobic	20-60 minutes continuous exercise (use Rating of Perceived Exertion - see next 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 muscles for aerobic and/or weight training exercise.

Aerobic

- Done 3-7 days of the week.
- Uses large muscle groups working together.
- This should cause an increase in heart rate (HR) and breathing rate, but you should still be able to carry on a conversation.
- Walking is the preferred type of exercise.

If unable to perform 20-60 minutes of continuous exercise, try shorter bouts of exercise equaling a total of 20-60 minutes.

Weight Training

- Use light weights 2-3 days per week
- Training should include 10-15 repetitions of 8-10 different types of exercise that involve major muscle groups (legs, back, chest, shoulders, and arms).
- Proper breathing is very important when doing weight training. Be sure to breathe out on the exertional part of the exercise.
- Strength training should only be performed after some form of aerobic warm-up.

Note: It is not safe to do isometric training (pushing or pulling against a fixed object like a wall or bar) at this time.

Cool Down

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

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.

Balance/Coordination Exercises

- Important due to the risk of falling.
- Ask your physician what the best balance exercises are for you.
- Should be done 2-3 times per week.

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 their physician.

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
- Severe headache
- Anything that feels different than usual.

BORG 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 consultants at:

Cardiovascular Center

734-936-5627

Cardiovascular Medicine at Domino's Farms

734-998-5666 or 998-7400

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