

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 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 most days of the week.
- Uses large muscle groups working together.
- *Vigorous upper body workouts should be avoided.*
- This 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 do 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, and arms).
- Increase to 2-3 sets of 15 reps when able to tolerate.
- Strength training should only be performed after some form of aerobic warm-up.
- Be sure to breathe on the exertional part of the exercise (when you are contracting the specific muscle you are training).

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.

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.
- 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

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 888-287-1082

Cardiovascular Medicine at Domino's Farms 734-998-5666

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