

PRESCRIPTION for health



SAMPLE EXERCISE PLAN

The calendar below will provide you with a sample workout plan that includes both aerobic and resistance exercise!

SUNDAY	Walk or Ride Bicycle for 20 Minutes x2
MONDAY	Walk for 20 Minutes x2
TUESDAY	Plank for 30 Seconds x2 Wall-sits 30 Seconds x2 10 Dips x2
WEDNESDAY	Brisk Walk for 30 Minutes & Jog for 10 Minutes
THURSDAY	Plank for 30 Seconds x2 Wall-sits 30 Seconds x2 10 Dips x2
FRIDAY	Walk for 20 Minutes x2
SATURDAY	Do Something Fun and Active Outside!

Commit to Fit! Prescription for Health materials adapted from the Exercise is Medicine Program (ACSM).

ABOUT US

The *Commit to Fit!* Prescription for Health Program is an evidence-based, best practice program that is designed to increase the practice of disease-specific physical activity and support linkages to community-based fitness and nutrition.

Commit to Fit! is a community-wide health behavior improvement initiative designed to promote the practice of healthy lifestyles in Genesee County by utilizing a common message and strategy that engages all residents. To facilitate improved health behaviors throughout the year, *Commit to Fit!* offers community-based classes as well as annual community-wide challenges centered around physical activity, nutrition, and overall wellness. *Commit to Fit!* is free to all those who live, learn, work, and play in Flint & Genesee County.



519 South Saginaw Street, Suite 306
Flint, Michigan 48502-1815
Business: 810-232-2228 • Fax: 810-232-3332
commit2fit@flint.org • commit2fit.com

WHY IS EXERCISE IMPORTANT FOR PATIENTS WITH COPD?

One of the main problems people with COPD experience during exercise is shortness of breath. They react by avoiding exercise, which reduces their fitness level. As a result, breathing becomes harder, and shortness of breath occurs at even lower levels of activity. Becoming more active can reverse this cycle. Exercise can help improve your muscles, heart, and circulation. This can lower the stress of exercise on your breathing. When you exercise regularly, you will have less shortness of breath, increased exercise capacity, and a better quality of life. COPD may make exercise more challenging for you, however, regular activity can improve your symptoms. Exercise also can make it easier to perform everyday tasks. The key is to find and follow a program that meets your individual needs and concerns.

Just starting out? Begin with aerobic exercise. However, if your COPD has kept you from normal activity, you may have a decrease in the size of your muscles. This is called muscle atrophy. It causes reduced strength, especially in the lower limbs. Atrophy can make people with COPD so weak they can't exercise long enough to improve their condition. If this is the case, then you may need to start with strength training. Later, you will want to do both types of exercise to improve your overall health and fitness.

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GETTING STARTED

- Talk with your doctor before you start an exercise program. Ask about any changes to your medications or concerns in becoming more active.
- Take all medicines prescribed by your doctor.
- Set the right goals. Aim for increased fitness, less shortness of breath, more efficient breathing, and increased ease in your daily activities.
- Remember, exercise is just one component of your rehab program.
- Make a long term commitment to your program for improved health. It might take up to 12 weeks to get useful results.
- At times, you might feel little or no change in the severity of your disease. Remember, the usual pattern for COPD is to get worse over time. No change, or maintaining the status quo, actually is an improvement.
- Adjust your workouts for variations in weather and changes in your symptoms.
- Consider air quality when choosing outdoor exercise. If the Air Quality Index (AQI) is in the moderate to unhealthy range (> 50), consider indoor exercise.
- Start slowly. Just 10 minutes of walking each day is enough.
- Take as many breaks as you need.
- Increase the intensity and duration of your workouts over time. Focus more on duration.
- Start by exercising on your own. Begin walking or another form of activity that you can integrate into your daily routine.
- Visit commit2fit.com for free exercise and nutrition programs in Flint & Genesee County.
- You may be eligible for a free wearable fitness tracker! Contact commit2fit@flint.org or (810) 232-2228.

AEROBIC EXERCISE PROGRAMS

The American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) recommends at least 150 minutes per week of moderate intensity aerobic activity, 75 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity, or an equivalent combination of both for adults. They also suggest muscle strengthening twice a week.

Follow the **FITT** Principle to Design and Implement a Safe, Effective Exercise Program!

Frequency – Work up to being active most days of the week.

Intensity – Exercise at a moderate level. Use the “talk test” to help you monitor. For example, even though you may notice a slight rise in your heart rate and breathing, you should be able to carry on a conversation while walking at a moderate pace. As you walk faster, you will begin to breathe faster and have difficulty talking. At that point, you’ve achieved moderate intensity or a “somewhat hard” level of exercise.

Time – Work up to 30 minutes of exercise per day. You can do it all at once or break it up into a few sessions of at least 10 minutes each.

Type – Do rhythmic exercises using the large muscle groups. Try brisk walking, cycling, and swimming. Choose activities you enjoy and will do regularly in your new, more active lifestyle. Add variety depending on the day or the season to keep your program more enjoyable.



AEROBIC EXERCISE CAUTIONS

- Improve your breathing by pursing your lips and engaging your diaphragm. This will slow your respiratory rate. If needed, use oxygen therapy during exercise. This will help you maintain adequate blood oxygen levels.
- Avoid extreme weather. Plan to exercise during mid- to late morning. Remember, cold air can narrow airways in addition to your COPD.
- If you have been inactive for a long time, start with short sessions (10 to 15 minutes). Add 5 minutes to each session, increasing every 2 to 4 weeks. Gradually build up to being active at least 30 minutes a day for most days of the week.
- Drink plenty of fluids before, during, and after exercise.

RESISTANCE EXERCISE PROGRAMS

Moderate or vigorous intensity resistance training is important to your program. Resistance training helps you to function better. It also promotes good physical and mental health. You should follow the FITT principle when creating a resistance exercise program.



Follow the **FITT** Principle When Creating a Resistance Exercise Program, Too!

Frequency – Do resistance training at least 2 days per week. Plan a day of rest between sessions.

Intensity – Exercise at a moderate level. If you can lift a weight 10 to 15 times, you’ve achieved moderate intensity. You get to high intensity when you can lift a weight only eight to ten times. Remember, you aren’t training to be a weight lifter. Your goal is to improve your strength and muscle endurance so your daily activities will be less stressful.

Time – This will depend on the number of exercises you do.

Type – Exercise all major muscle groups using either free weights or a machine. There is no difference between the two methods.

Don’t belong to a gym or health club? No problem. You can do the same exercises at home using lighter weights, resistance bands, or your body weight as the resistance, like push-ups or sit-ups. Also, view free fitness classes in your community at commit2fit.com.

RESISTANCE EXERCISE CAUTIONS

- Avoid holding your breath when lifting. This can cause large changes in blood pressure. That change may increase the risk of passing out or developing abnormal heart rhythms.
- If you have joint problems or other health problems, do only one set for all major muscle groups. Start with 10 to 15 repetitions. Build up to 15 to 20 repetitions before you add another set.

