

PRESCRIPTION *for health*



OTHER TYPES OF EXERCISE

- Exercise for flexibility offers general health benefits. Each day you do aerobic or strength activities, take an extra 10 minutes to stretch the major muscle and tendon groups. Each stretch should last 10 to 30 seconds and be repeated 3 to 4 times.
- Tai Chi and yoga are good programs for balance, flexibility, and mobility. They also help with relaxation and a sense of well-being.
- Consider reaching out to an appropriately credentialed exercise professional to work with you and your doctor. Together, you can establish realistic goals and design a safe, effective, and enjoyable program.

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 40 Minutes
MONDAY
Brisk Walk for 40 Minutes
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
Brisk Walk for 40 Minutes
SATURDAY
Do Something Fun and Active Outside!



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

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

Regular physical activity is good for anxiety and depression. It can improve your mood and self-esteem. It will help reduce stress. Regular exercise also helps you sleep better and have more energy.

WHY IS EXERCISE IMPORTANT FOR PATIENTS WITH ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION?

Anxiety can cause fear or nervousness about what may happen in the future. Many studies show even just one exercise session can lower anxiety and make you feel calmer. The effect is similar to meditation or taking medication. Long-term, regular activity lowers anxiety, especially for people who are very anxious.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), depression affects 7.6 percent of adults in the United States. The main symptom in depression is fatigue. Over time, depression affects how people live. It raises their risk of dying. It also lowers self-esteem and motivation. It can even interfere in relationships. In other words, depression makes everyday life harder.

Research shows that regular moderate or vigorous physical activity improves mental well-being. It also helps with other symptoms of depression.

Does the type of exercise make a difference? Most studies show that moderate to high levels of physical activity reduce symptoms more than lighter levels. Different modes of moderate to high levels of exercise have similar effects. Longer exercise sessions are better than a few short ones through the day. Making exercise a regular part of your life can have a major impact on your health. The key is to choose activities you enjoy. Evidence suggests both aerobic and strength training exercises help with anxiety and depression. Try to do both. If you are just starting out, do more aerobic exercise. Over time, add resistance workouts. Doing both types will bring even more benefits for overall health and fitness.

GETTING STARTED

- Talk with your health care provider before you start an exercise program. Ask about any changes to your medications or any concerns in becoming more active.
- Take all medicines prescribed by your doctor.
- The main goal is to find activities you enjoy and will do regularly. Choose places that are well known and familiar to you. Avoid situations that raise your anxiety.
- Start by exercising on your own. Begin walking or another form of activity that you can integrate into your daily routine.
- If your fitness level is low, start with shorter sessions (even 5 to 10 minutes). Over time, build up to 20 to 60 minutes of aerobic activity.
- Invite others to join you. Exercising together is more fun. It also increases the chance you will continue. Dogs also make great walking partners!
- 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.

INSIDE

Aerobic Exercise Programs

Resistance Exercise Programs

Sample Exercise Plan



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 – Be active on most days of the week, but at least 3 to 4 days. Work up to 5 days a week.

Intensity – Exercise at a moderate or vigorous level. Use the “talk test” to help you monitor. For example, a moderate pace will slightly increase your heart rate and breathing, but you should still be able to carry on a conversation. As you walk faster, you will begin to breathe faster and have difficulty talking. At that point, you’ve achieved moderate intensity or “somewhat hard” level of exercise. Vigorous exercise causes a large rise in heart rate and breathing. At this intensity, it would become hard to talk. Most people would rate this as “hard to very hard.”

Time – Exercise 30 to 60 minutes 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

- If you take medicine, be aware that it might affect your response to exercise. For example, some antipsychotic medicines can cause dehydration or gait problems. Some antidepressants can cause fatigue, dizziness, and weight gain. Other antidepressants can make you drowsy but won't affect your response to exercise.
- If you have been inactive, consider joining a structured, supervised program. This will provide a routine that you will be able to continue.
- Do not push too hard at the beginning. This may cause soreness and pain, which could make it harder to continue.
- 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 four 4. Over time, build up to being active at least 30 to 60 minutes a day on most days of the week.



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.

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 – Begin at a moderate level. If you can lift a weight 10 to 15 times, you've achieved moderate intensity. Do more repetitions with less weight to reduce muscle soreness. Pain is no friend to people with anxiety or depression. Over time, work up to heavier weight.

Time – Do 2 to 3 sets with all major muscle groups.

Type – People less familiar with strength exercises should begin with weight machines. As strength improves, add free weights.

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



RESISTANCE EXERCISE CAUTIONS

- Don't hold your breath when you lift. This can cause large changes in blood pressure. That change increases the risk of passing out or developing abnormal heart rhythms. This is especially so if you also have high blood pressure.
- 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.
- Remember, you are not training to be a weight lifter. Rather, you are trying to improve your strength and muscle endurance. In addition, your daily life will be less stressful.