TOP 10 TIPS FOR EXERCISE

Having a heart condition shouldn’t stop you from being active. Here are 10 tips to help get you started.

1. **Get your heart pumping every day.** Work the large muscles in your arms and legs by walking, swimming or cycling.

2. **Work your other muscles, too.** Strengthening your trunk, arms and legs improves your overall fitness.

3. **Work on balance.** Do something to challenge your balance every day, even standing on one leg in a safe place.

4. **Some exercise is better than no exercise.** Sessions of at least 10 minutes are beneficial as you work towards 150 to 200 minutes per week.

5. **Set a goal and track your progress.** Set realistic goals and adjust them regularly.

6. **Warm up and cool down.** Gently increase your intensity over the first 5-10 minutes and gradually slow down at the end.

7. **Listen to your body.** Aim for a feeling of “moderate to somewhat difficult” rather than “easy” or “too difficult.” If you can sing while exercising, take it up a notch; if you can’t talk without pausing to breathe, back off a bit. **Moderate intensity exercise is safe for most people.** If you’re unsure or want to push a little harder, check with your healthcare provider.

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9. **Sit less, move more.** Moving often throughout the day will improve your overall health.

10. **Need motivation to start?** Make a plan with a friend or join a group to help get you started. To help get you started, look for the Heart Wise Exercise logo to find a safe and appropriate exercise program. [www.heartwise.ottawaheart.ca](http://www.heartwise.ottawaheart.ca)