



UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA  
HEART INSTITUTE  
INSTITUT DE CARDIOLOGIE  
DE L'UNIVERSITÉ D'OTTAWA



# 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.
- 8 Moderate intensity exercise is safe for most people.** If you're unsure or want to push a little harder, check with your healthcare provider.
- 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)