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# Home Exercise for Patients with Disabilities

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All people, including those with disabilities, can benefit from regular physical activity.

During the coronavirus pandemic, patients may have experienced changes to their exercise and fitness routines, such as gym or pool closures. Despite these societal changes, national guidelines for exercise and fitness have not changed.<sup>1</sup>

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, people with disabilities are three times more likely to have a chronic disease, such as hypertension, cardiovascular disease, and diabetes. Yet nearly 50% of all adults with disabilities do not participate in any aerobic physical activity.<sup>2</sup> Encouraging activity during the pandemic and beyond can occur in an office setting or via telehealth platforms. Recommended exercise programs should be individualized and based on the patient’s health and function.



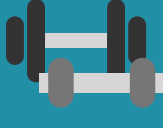
The National Center on Health, Physical Activity and Disability has detailed **factsheets** on exercise and fitness recommendations by health condition.<sup>3</sup> It also curates a series of **factsheets** on various forms of exercise, such as adapted yoga or high-intensity weight training, specifically for patients with disabilities.<sup>4</sup>

For more information, access Cardi-OH’s expanded resource on **Increasing Physical Activity and Exercise in Adults with Disabilities** and on Twitter **@cardi\_OH**.

## REFERENCES

1. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2nd edition. [https://health.gov/sites/default/files/2019-09/Physical\\_Activity\\_Guidelines\\_2nd\\_edition.pdf](https://health.gov/sites/default/files/2019-09/Physical_Activity_Guidelines_2nd_edition.pdf). Published 2018. Accessed September 9, 2020.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Inactivity Related to Chronic Disease in Adults with Disabilities. <https://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/division-information/media-tools/dpk/vs-disability-activity/index.html>. Updated 2019. Accessed September 9, 2020.
3. National Center on Health, Physical Activity and Disability. Disability/Condition. <https://www.nchpad.org/Articles/7/Disability~Condition>. Updated 2020. Accessed September 9, 2020.
4. National Center on Health, Physical Activity and Disability. Exercise and Fitness. <https://www.nchpad.org/Articles/9/Exercise~and~Fitness>. Updated 2020. Accessed September 9, 2020.
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There are three main types of physical activity that contribute to diverse health benefits:

	<p><b>AEROBIC ACTIVITY</b> is an endurance activity, also referred to as cardio activity, that involves constant movement of the large muscles.</p>
	<p><b>MUSCLE-STRENGTHENING</b> activity includes resistance training and weight lifting.</p>
	<p><b>BONE-STRENGTHENING</b> includes weight-bearing or weight-loading to promote bone growth.<sup>5</sup> Exercise to improve flexibility and balance is also recommended for all adults.</p>

## Physical Activity Resources for Patients

- » An eight-minute, ability-inclusive **workout video** that includes aerobic, strength, and flexibility exercises can be performed on a work-from-home break without equipment.
- » **Exercise bands** can be purchased online and facilitate aerobic and strength training.
- » Certain **core exercises**, such as planks, can be adapted for wheelchair users.
- » At-home balance and strength exercises using common household items, initially used for post-stroke patients and targeted toward older adults, can be helpful **workout tools**.