

AEROBIC EXERCISE

is an extremely important part of maintaining good cardiovascular health. What is less commonly known about aerobic exercise is that it can help reduce pain as well.

Aerobic exercise can be simply defined as exercise that



Increases your heart rate



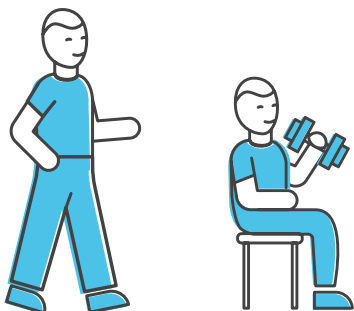
Increases your breathing rate



Increases your body temperature

Essentially, if your heart is beating a little faster, you're breathing a bit harder, and you're feeling like you're getting a bit warmer, you're exercising aerobically!

When we exercise aerobically, we are moving and strengthening major muscle groups that help support our joints in our upper and lower body, and stabilize muscles around our spine, which can help support areas of pain. Our body releases endorphins, or “happy hormones” when we exercise aerobically, which can reduce the level of pain that we feel by reducing stress. Exercising regularly can also help improve our sleep. The benefits are immense!



BUT I'M NOT A RUNNER...

A lot of people think that Aerobic exercise, or “cardio” has to be something really intense, like running long distances or swimming a lot of laps in a pool. The reality is that your body can benefit greatly from lighter forms of aerobic exercise, like walking, riding a bike, gentle pool exercise, or even seated exercise.

When we're dealing with pain, sometimes the more intense forms of exercise aren't an option. We don't want to push through pain to exercise at a certain intensity, so the less intense forms are a great way to continue to stay healthy while recovering.

30_{min}

5X /week

THE GOAL

The recommended amount of aerobic exercise per week is 150 minutes. That translates roughly to around 30 mins, 5 times a week. 30 minutes of cardio can feel daunting to a lot of people, especially those who are in pain and just trying to get moving again.



START SMALL AND BUILD FROM THERE

Make a short term goal for increasing your aerobic exercise, based on where you are at now. Remember to make it a SMART goal (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Time- Bound).

For example, if you aren't doing any aerobic exercise right now, a good starting point would be:

Within the next two weeks, I am going to go for two, 10-minute walks around my neighborhood.

This is specific (when and where), measurable and time- bound (10 minutes) and should feel fairly achievable for most. If 10 minutes of walking would flare up your pain, you would want to choose a different form of cardio like seated exercises, pool exercises, or riding a bike on flat ground. If you are already exercising a little, think about adding a bit more, using the same SMART goal framework.

From this short term goal you can continue to build and achieve more and more aerobic exercise, moving closer to that long term goal of 150 minutes per week. Work with your Health coach to make a personalized plan to start exercising more.

Using the example above, write your aerobic activity SMART goal below to get started:

AEROBIC SMART GOAL