

Rehabilitation is a service or activity that can help to address or prevent many of the health-related challenges (or disabilities) that people living with HIV and Hepatitis C (Hep C) experience. You are an important part of the rehabilitation team and there are many strategies which are considered important components of rehabilitation that you can put into action to help deal with these challenges.

EXERCISE & HIV & Hepatitis C

Research has shown that many types of exercises are safe and beneficial for people living with HIV and/or Hep C who are medically stable and can even make you feel better.

Before you Start to Exercise - Be sure to talk with your physician, or other health care provider to find out which program might be right for you.

Regular aerobic or resistance exercise can:

- ✦ Improve your physical strength
- ✦ Improve and maintain your mood (e.g. relieve stress, depression & anxiety)
- ✦ Improve your cardiovascular health
- ✦ Help you to maintain a healthy weight

Weight-bearing activities: Bearing your own weight while walking, even for brief periods, can help you to build strong bones and prevent osteoporosis.

Exercise with weights: Exercising with hand and ankle weights or weight machines can increase your strength and reduce pain.

Exercise in water: Some people find it easier to exercise in water. Many community recreation centers have water exercise programs. Pool programs geared towards arthritis or osteoporosis may be especially beneficial for persons living with HIV and/or Hep C.

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SELF-MANAGEMENT TIPS

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Rehabilitation professionals often recommend:

- ✦ Exercise in water/swimming
- ✦ Walking
- ✦ Cycling
- ✦ Dancing

Exercise Tips:

- Any amount of exercise you can do is great, (e.g. walking a few minutes a day, simple stretches while sitting).
- If you can, work up to exercising for a total of at least 30 minutes, three to five times a week.
- Regular exercise is the key to success but you don't have to do it all at one time.
- Three 10-minute periods of exercise a day work just as well as one 30-minute session.

Exercise programs have been developed for people who are unable to stand or walk. Often these are available online and on DVDs which are available through local libraries.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

Source: originally written by Canadian Working Group on HIV and Rehabilitation [CWGHR] for CATIE: "Managing Your Health" Rehabilitation Chapter 2008 Edition. Updated Managing Your Health can be found at: www.catie.ca/en/practical-guides/managing-your-health

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