

Anaerobic Programming for Clients with Disabilities

Anaerobic exercise is a great way to build and maintain muscle. It can also help clients improve some of the functional movements associated with their disability. Here's how to build a successful anaerobic exercise program.



Frequency

ACSM recommends two days per week of whole-body resistance training, with at least one rest day between such sessions. But in the beginning, this may be too much for some clients. Be flexible.

Exercise Type

Assess all the resistance exercise options available in the space where the workout will take place. Choose exercises that relate to your client's goals (e.g., strengthening wheelchair push mechanics, transferring,



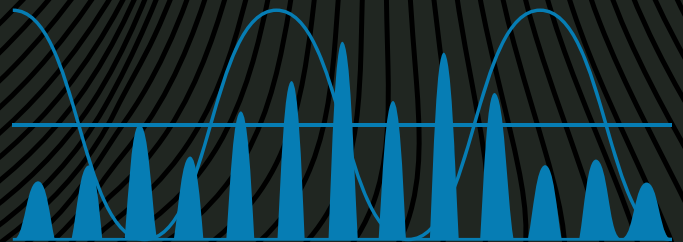
Exercise Order

Perform large muscle group exercises before small muscle group exercises and multi-joint exercises before single-joint exercises. Move from more complex exercises to less complex exercises, and rotate between upper- and lower-body exercises, as applicable.



Intensity

Appropriate exercise intensity depends on your client's disability and fitness level. ACSM provides guidelines for many disabilities and chronic conditions; in general, working at 60% of your client's 1 rep max or performing 10-15 reps to muscle fatigue are appropriate. Consider using the rate of perceived exertion (RPE) scale as well.



Volume

Reps are the number of times an exercise is performed per cycle, and sets are the number of cycles per workout. Exercise volume should have an inverse relationship with intensity: broadly speaking, as weight increases, reps should decrease.