

Being Active when You Have a Bleeding Disorder



Do you want to feel better, move better and sleep better? Experts now say that any physical activity counts toward better health – even just a few minutes!

Many people with bleeding disorders limit their physical activity. This increases their risk of developing heart problems, obesity and diabetes. Regular physical activity can actually lower the number of bleeding episodes and the amount of bleeding (and related pain). Being active can also help your treatment and medications work better. If you'd like better fitness and health, stronger muscles, improved coordination and a healthy body weight, get moving!



Getting Started

Keep It Simple

Sit less and move around more! Walk to the mailbox. Walk the dog. Dance in the kitchen. Take the stairs. Find opportunities to move throughout the day. It all adds up.

Talk with Your Doctor

Talk with your health care provider before you start an exercise program to discuss your concerns about becoming more active.

Non-Contact Activities

Try non-contact activities such as brisk walking, swimming, cycling, rowing, golf, tai chi and weight-training. This will reduce your chance of bleeding.

Be Active with a Friend

Do activities that you enjoy and find an activity buddy at home or work. Those who exercise with a friend tend to stick with it longer than those who go it alone.

Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can.

Bleeding Disorder Tips and Cautions

Avoid contact sports such as soccer, hockey, rugby, boxing, wrestling, tackle football or lacrosse that may cause bleeding injuries. Check with your health care provider to see if it's okay for you to participate in a supervised sports program that uses protective equipment.

Ask your provider if a specific activity is safe. Discuss your skill level, treatment options and protective gear. A brace or splint may help protect some joints from deep bleeding while you are active.

If you've had a bleeding episode recently, resume activity slowly to reduce the chance of a re-bleed.

If you have serious muscle or bone problems, do strength training or weight-bearing activities that your joints can handle. This will help keep your bones healthy.

Aerobic Activity

Aerobic activity increases your heart rate and breathing. Build up to doing at least 150 minutes a week of moderate-intensity activity (like a brisk walk), 75 minutes/week of challenging activity (somewhat hard to very hard) or a combination of both.

What?

Any rhythmic, continuous activity!

How often?

3-5 Days/week

How hard?

Fairly light to somewhat hard

How much?

Start w/a few minutes. Gradually build up to 30-60 minutes over the day.

Remember: Fit in 5 or 10 minutes here and there. Or go for 20-30 minutes. Be active however and wherever you can. To lose weight, do twice as much. Walking, biking, dancing and water exercises are great.

To stay safe and injury free:

- Start with light to medium effort.
- Gradually increase your pace and time spent being active. Start low and go slow!
- Warm up and cool down at an easy pace before and after exercise.

Strength Training

Strength training, for example working with weights or resistance bands, makes you stronger and helps your overall health. Plus, strength training can make daily activities like lifting laundry baskets or yardwork easier and safer.

What?

Hand weights, resistance bands, weight machines or your own body, for example, kitchen counter push-ups or chair squats

How often?

2-3 Days/week *Rest day in between

How hard?

Start with light effort. Build up to medium or hard effort.

How much?

10-15 repetitions to start (for each major muscle group). Build up to 8-12 reps of challenging effort.

Remember: Avoid straining or holding your breath when lifting. If you need it, get help from a certified exercise professional. They can teach you the right way to do exercises and how to breathe properly.

Other Types of Physical Activity

Aerobic activity and strength training are at the heart of a program for those with a bleeding disorder. But you may enjoy and benefit from these other options.

Yoga, Tai Chi and Pilates

All help with balance, flexibility and strength, and are relaxing too!

Flexibility Exercises

Stretch your muscles 2-7 days/ week. Stretch to the point of feeling tightness. Hold for 10-30 seconds (30-60 seconds for older adults). For example, stretch your calves or the back of your thighs.

Balance Training

Balance exercises may include standing on one foot, walking on a line or walking on a balance board. Train in an uncluttered area and use a chair or wall for support if needed.

More Help

Go to www.acsm.org/get-stay-certified/find-a-pro to find an ACSM certified exercise professional near you.

How will I get started **this week?** _____
