

## How are you Staying Active in Isolation?

Routine disruption is one of the most common barriers to staying consistent with a physical activity routine. With the feelings of uncertainty that are palpably scattered among our society, it is difficult to prevent them from seeping into our daily lives. This is why stress relief coping mechanisms are needed to be put into action vigilantly, not only to maintain our mental health, but also our fitness and immune system. Keeping a structured and planned exercise routine is one way we can adjust to the new norm we are experiencing. Having a weekly activity schedule to follow can help restore purpose and regularity to balance out that overwhelming sense of the unknown.



### Staying active in the home

Part of your new routine may be working from home or working less with MORE free time. Either scenario probably involves more screen time. This can be mentally draining and even increase feelings of anxiety. To minimize eye strain and regain concentration try to take a break every hour when you are working at the computer or binge- watching Netflix. During any prolonged sedentary period (over 60 minutes) aim for 5-10 minutes per hour of movement. This can just be some stretching, pacing around the house, doing a few chores, playing with the dog, or something that gets your heart rate slightly increased like going up and down the stairs or jumping jacks. My preference for taking a movement break is to put some music on and dance like nobody is watching! It is a great way to release endorphins, shake some of the stir-crazy feelings off, and keep joint stiffness at bay.

### How much of what type of exercise is needed

To achieve health benefits from physical activity it is recommended for adults 18-64 years of age to



accumulate **150 active minutes per week** and spend a minimum of **2 days/ week** doing bone and muscle strengthening activities. Active minutes means you are doing something at a moderate to vigorous intensity where your heart rate has risen to a minimum of 50% of your maximum. To gage this without measuring you will start to feel your breathing labor increase. Start with small amounts (bouts of 10) and gradually increase the frequency and intensity so as not to get overwhelmed

with the workload. **For adults over 65 years** it is also recommended to incorporate balance into your activity especially if you have poor mobility.

Your accumulated active minutes can include any of the activities we talked about that you can do during your screen/work break time and time spent chasing around the kids. Try some new lawn games now that it is starting to warm up such as bocce, and frisbee golf. Kicking a soccer ball around or any other game using the feet only is the best way to keep up with hand hygiene. Your

activity can include things you might not have thought about such as housework, you can get your lunges and squats in as you clean the nooks and cranny's this spring-cleaning season.

### Stay motivated and connected

Plan for success, when is the most ideal time to schedule your exercise? The more motivated you are to fit it into your day the more flexible your scheduled time can be. Check in with your motivation on a scale of 1-10 if it is on the lower side, try to get to your workout first thing in the morning, or whenever you feel most energetic.

For those of you who were used to working out at a gym, switching to working out at home can present some different challenges. I often hear there are many distractions. If possible, make a separated space reserved for your workout with everything you need so that you can unplug from the rest of the day's tasks in your allotted exercise time. Connect with nature even if you are staying inside. Try to keep your workout space in an area with some natural light. If it is in the basement, use some inspiring nature pictures or plants.



Research indicates that exercising outside has positive mental health and motivation outcomes. Studies show that even a plant or picture of nature in the room can improve mood and overall motivation when exercising at a moderate to high intensity.

Check in with friends and participate in virtual challenges. There are apps such as Strava that use your phone to track your movement and you can sync it to your activity tracking device. Challenge each other to cover the largest distance that week. There are also virtual races where you can learn about international trails. Using an activity tracker is a great way to check in with your own activity and can be a daily motivator to accomplish the recommended 10k steps per day.

Here are some basics that are great for a home gym. All of this equipment can be found on websites **such as [fitter1.com](http://fitter1.com) and [amazon.ca](http://amazon.ca)**:

- An exercise mat or carpeted space, something that gives you more cushioning when doing exercises lying or kneeling on the floor.
- An exercise ball, for stability exercises and it is a great alternative to use as an office chair, it can help with posture.
- Resistance bands with handles. They usually come in a set. Northern lights brand also has very thick bands that equal up to 50lbs.
- Free weights up to 15 lbs are usually sufficient. There are hacks to lifting heavier than this such as filling a duffle bag full of books.
- Sore muscles? Try a tennis ball or foam roller.

### Other equipment and workout options:

- Some boutique fitness studios such as our downstairs neighbors, MovementU are renting their spin bikes out to customers which include access to online classes.
- My go to cardio machines are the treadmill and exercise bike. The treadmill is great for getting your daily steps in and varying jogging, hills and sprinting. The bike is great for the joints and leg muscle endurance.
- Suspension training is a great home device to incorporate stability, rehab and fitness.
- There are loads of free workout videos online so which to choose?
  - Smart TVs now have a large variety of workout videos like yoga, strength training, aerobics and barre.
  - I like to use the Nike Training app if I am using the app on my phone.
  - If you have an activity- tracker they also come with training apps such as fitbit coach.
  - Lululemon and other fitness philosophy stores have online classes available. Visit their websites.
  - Redefining Strength by Cory Lekowith is a blog- based training site and it takes a good therapeutic strength approach. She also has a podcast.



\*To calculate your max heart rate:  $220 - \text{your age}$ . You should aim to start your intensity at 50% of this number\*

### Disclaimer:

Consult your doctor before engaging in physical activity if you have difficulty controlling your heart or lung conditions.

Please remember you are not alone in this challenging time. It is time to take control of your pain, physical fitness and health. I am here to support you in any way that I can. To stay connected please take advantage of APC's free Kinesiology video conference and phone calls. With these, I will work with you to understand in more detail what activity is appropriate for your baseline. I will provide a more personalized goal-oriented approach to your home exercise whether you would just like to move around confidently and pain free or continue your performance training.

## Kinesiology at APC



Please feel free to contact me directly at [aleisia.arkley@advancedprimarycare.ca](mailto:aleisia.arkley@advancedprimarycare.ca) with any questions, comments or to set up your session today.

Yours in health,

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