

Exercise Planner for Inflammatory Bowel Disease

Getting started

It's challenging to exercise often and there can be lots of barriers to doing it regularly. Fatigue can be one of them and it can be hard to do anything when you feel exhausted. The promising thing is that many studies have looked at exercise to help improve fatigue – and it works! We want to give you all the tools to help you start exercising more to help with your fatigue and make you feel better.

We want you to exercise daily but we know that 5 times a week is more achievable. It doesn't have to be long but we want it to be often!

Why should I exercise daily?

Our recent study found that disease activity reduced by an average of 30% in those who were able to exercise five times a week. Half of those with active disease were able to achieve disease remission after four months of this programme. Our study also found that exercising, even a small amount, five times a week significantly improved energy levels and mental health (anxiety, depression, and quality of life).



Start small and go slow

Set a realistic target for you to do each week and steadily increase it. Don't force yourself to do more than you can. A 10m walk 5 times a week is better than an hour walk once a week!

You're completing a marathon, not a sprint so change your goals accordingly. Listen to what your body is telling you – it'll let you know if you're doing too much or too little.

- ✓ Don't burn yourself out completely the first week and not be able to exercise the second week.
- ✓ Do what you think you can do each week and steadily increase it.
- ✓ If you're feeling especially tired one week repeat a similar level of exercise as the week before.

Be flexible

- ✓ Change things up and don't let the weather stop you from achieving your goals for the week. For instance, if it's raining but you said you were going to go for a 30min walk, swap it out for a 15min deep water run instead.
- ✓ It's ok to swap your exercise sessions around if you want but still aim for at least five sessions a week. If you find that it's difficult to exercise in the morning, swap to doing them in the afternoon.
- ✓ It's ok to change the plan
- ✓ It is ok to not do what you said you were going to do that day but it is important that you start again.
- ✓ Make up for missed sessions (you'll feel so much better for doing so.)
- ✓ Every little bit you do adds up and brings you one step closer to improving your health and fitness.

I'm too tired to exercise, what should I do?

Some days it can feel like exercise would be too much for you. Often we underestimate our abilities but some days it really is time for a rest day.

- ✓ On these days, do something really gentle – a slow walk or a bike ride.
- ✓ These days are good to practice flexibility and patience both of which you'll need to reach your goal of having more energy during the day.
- ✓ If you notice the next day you still feel exhausted, then this may be a sign that you pushed yourself too hard this week. Ease off/go back a step on your next few workouts until you feel like it is too easy again.

I don't feel like I have time to exercise, what should I do?

- ✓ This is an understandable dilemma with our busy lives.
- ✓ Some of the exercises we have given you require some planning such as heading to the pool but a number don't.
- ✓ HIIT can be done in as little as 10min and at home - try it when you're watching tv at night.
- ✓ If you work on a multi-story building take the stairs instead of the elevator – little bits add up.



- ✓ Every time you lace up your sneakers you are helping yourself and are one step closer to achieving your goal.

What if I need to use the bathroom when I exercise?

- ✓ Why not give HIIT a go – it can be done in your lounge.
- ✓ Go for a walk around the block and walk past your house every lap.
- ✓ Find where the gas stations are and go past a couple of them.
- ✓ Walk up and down the mall a couple of times & use the toilets there.
- ✓ The DCC have a list of all public toilets on their website so check them out and plan a route where you go past some of these.

The Exercises

Walking

Walking is a great way to get some exercise in when you're busy. It is low impact so it shouldn't hurt your joints. Aim for moderate intensity when you walk – you should be able to hold a conversation but not sing. If you want an extra challenge try walking a bit faster, carry a backpack or heading up a hill. Keep things interesting – even if you stick close to home, switch the direction you walk or pick different streets to walk down.

Deep-water running / Aqua jogging

Deep-water running (or aqua jogging) is a great way to give yourself a good workout without feeling like it. This is a low-impact option and all you need is a pool!

It is exactly like running on land but this time in a pool. If you get in to the pool and feel yourself sinking – grab a flotation belt to help keep your head above the water. It may feel silly at first but it's important to keep going. It will start to feel very normal quickly.

You won't notice just how much work you have done until you get out of the water. In your first session, go slow and do a little less than you planned on doing – you'll be surprised with how tired you are when you get out of the pool. If you feel good afterwards though, then increase it the next time you go.

High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT) & Body-Weight Exercises

HIIT is a great if you only have a short time free. The key to success though is to do the moves at your own pace. Aim go hard but don't go so hard you can't move the next day. The exercises often require no equipment or equipment that can be found easily in your home.

Basic HIIT circuit

Complete the four moves 2, 3 or 4 times. Do each move for 30 seconds with a 2-3min rest between them. After completing the four moves once, take another break and repeat.

Move 1: Jumping jacks

Move 2: Press-ups

Move 3: Squats

Move 4: Lunges

The great thing with body weight exercises & HIIT is that you can do them at your own pace. The breaks between each move can be as long or as short as you like.

For more HIIT ideas do a Google search or download some free apps such as *Seven* or *SworKit*.

Let's make a plan...

At the start of the month pencil in any major events (weddings, holidays, etc) to help you plan around them.

At the start of each week, fill in your activity plan. Specify the activity and duration (e.g. walk 15 mins). Be inspired by your list of activities. Aim to do some activity every day.

At the end of each day fill in the star if you completed your activity.

At the end of the week count your stars - did you achieve your goals?

yes

no

For next week

- ✓ Stick to the same intensity or increase it.
- ✓ For example, try adding on another 5 minutes, a trip around the block, or another round of HIIT.
- ✓ Remember to aim to do some activity every day.

For next week

- ✓ Stick to the same intensity or decrease it.
- ✓ If you chose to decrease your activity, decrease the amount of time or intensity, not how often you're exercising.
- ✓ Remember to aim to do some activity every day.

Which activities do you want to try this month?

- Walking
- High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT)
- Deep water running / Aqua jogging
- Swimming
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Always check with your doctor before starting a new exercise programme.



Goal Chart

Month of _____

e.g. 

Activity + Duration

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Total 
 	 	 	 	 	 	 	
 	 	 	 	 	 	 	
 	 	 	 	 	 	 	
 	 	 	 	 	 	 	
 	 	 	 	 	 	 	