



Help to Get You Started

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Many people say that doing up the shoelaces is the hardest part of exercising. It's easy to find an excuse to do something else instead. Here are some ways to overcome those hurdles and ensure you're exercising for the long term!

Don't hold yourself back

It is natural to feel apprehensive about starting an exercise program. You may be concerned about pushing your body too hard, causing damage to your new organ or simply starting again after a period of inactivity. A physiotherapist or exercise physiologist can help guide you with appropriate exercise for your level of fitness and stage of recovery.

The key is to start slowly, with a level of exercise that feels right for you and to slowly progress as you feel

comfortable. If you're starting from a base of little or no physical activity, simply moving your body more and sitting less will bring both physical and mental health benefits.

If your medical team has recommended you start doing some exercise outside of their care you can be confident that you can participate in any activity that feels right for you.

As a general precaution:

- Wear a shirt, hat and sunscreen when out in the sun as those on immunosuppression are more vulnerable to the effects of the sun's UV radiation.
- Remember to hydrate before, during and after exercise. This might be a new concept if you have previously been on a fluid restriction.
- Ensure your wounds have healed prior to participating in water-based activities or any activity that may put too much stress on the wound.
- Although you'll be able to participate in a variety of activities, most transplant units advise against activities that risk direct impacts to your body such as boxing, football, hockey or other contact sports.

Follow these simple steps to make sure you're not pushing your body too far:

- Do not exercise if you are feeling unwell, particularly if you have a fever, a new infection, are feeling dizzy or nauseous.
- If you are unusually short of breath or feel very tired during any activity, slow down or take a rest.
- Stop exercising and rest if you experience dizziness, cold sweats, nausea or chest pain. If the pain persists, see a doctor.
- Reduce the intensity or duration of activity if your exercise program has been interrupted by more than a few days for any reason.

Importantly, remember that everyone recovers from their transplant at a different rate so avoid comparing yourself to others and work at a pace that feels right for you.



Find Someone to Help

Physiotherapist

A physiotherapist can help you return to exercise by providing a program that suits you and your goals. They can help you improve your strength, balance and flexibility to keep you strong and on your feet. The Australian Physiotherapy Association or your GP can assist you in accessing a physiotherapist in your local area.

Exercise Physiologist

Accredited exercise physiologists are allied health professionals equipped with the knowledge and skills to design a safe and effective exercise program for you. You can find an exercise physiologist in your area through the ESSA website at www.essa.org.au.

Personal Trainer/Fitness Instructor

Personal trainers or fitness instructors can be found in almost all locations – whether through a gym or recreation centre, or many run as small private

businesses. Be aware that your chosen trainer may not have any knowledge or experience with organ transplantation so you should make them aware of your special needs and recommend that they educate themselves through Transplant Active.

You can find a local qualified trainer through the AusActive website at www.ausactive.org.au.

Sports Club or Team

Don't overlook the importance of community and connection in keeping you active. If you enjoy what you're doing you're far more likely to continue. See if you can find a club, team or community group that shares your enthusiasm for your chosen activity and let the socialising begin!

Visit the Transplant Active Clubhouse on the Transplant Australia website to see if there are any transplant-specific clubs near you.

Some more quick tips

- Exercise with a friend or group – make exercise a social event
- Set specific times for exercise – committing to a certain day and time will make you more likely to follow through
- Exercise in a pleasant location – the more you enjoy it the more likely you are to continue
- Be creative – vary your workouts to maintain your interest and make it fun
- Be kind to yourself – accept your body for what it can do now, focus on the improvements you're making and listen to your body if it needs a break.



More than anything
we recommend you
set some goals to
help you along your
journey.