



Pancreatic disease and physical activity

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Introduction

When you have pancreatitis or pancreatic cancer, making changes to your lifestyle can help to reduce pain, prevent muscle wasting, and to improve your general health.

Exercise

Muscle loss is common in people who have pancreatitis or pancreatic cancer. Being unwell, eating less and being less active can all lead to loss of muscle bulk, strength and overall fitness. Doing regular exercise can help to minimise loss of muscle. Preserving your muscle will help you to have more energy, feel good and cope better with any treatment you might have.

Additionally regular exercise can help to; improve your appetite, stimulate digestion, prevent constipation, aid relaxation and lower levels of anxiety. Weight bearing exercise such as walking, jogging, cycling and aerobics can also help to strengthen your bones, preventing osteoporosis.

The aim for adults is to complete 150 minutes moderate intensity physical activity a week, in bouts of at least ten minutes. Gardening, brisk walking and washing the car can be classed as moderate intensity activities; if they start to make you a bit warm and a bit out of breath.

If you are usually quite fit and active and feel well enough to do your usual levels of exercise or activity then continue to do so. However if you are finding it difficult to be very active, this leaflet has some exercise suggestions for you, even when you are not feeling your best. For most people doing 10 minutes of these exercises three times a day would be suitable.

It is important not to do high intensity exercises without discussing this with your doctor or physiotherapist. The exercises in this leaflet are low intensity and are suitable for you. Please speak to your doctor if you have recently had surgery or have an untreated hernia before undertaking new exercises.

Bed/ floor exercises

You can practise the following exercises from the starting position below:



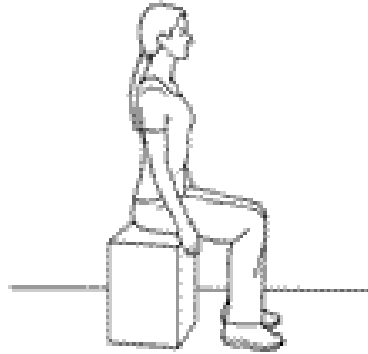
- Straighten and bend your legs one at a time. Repeat _____ times.
- With your knees together slowly roll them from side to side keeping your upper trunk still. Repeat _____ times.
- Squeeze your buttocks together and lift your bottom off the bed/ floor. Hold for _____ seconds and then return to the starting position. Repeat _____ times.



- Rotate your ankle in a full circle in both directions and then repeat with the other foot. Repeat _____ times.
- Tighten your thigh muscle and straighten your knee. Lift your leg _____ cm / _____ inches off the bed. Hold for _____ seconds and repeat _____ times.

Chair exercises

The following exercises can all be practiced from the starting position below:



- Tap your toes and then your heels on the floor alternately. Repeat _____ times.
- Pull your toes up, tighten your thigh muscle and straighten your knee. Hold for _____ seconds. Repeat _____ times on each leg.
- March your legs up and down lifting your knees towards the ceiling. Repeat _____ times.
- Stand up and then sit down slowly on a chair. If you need to, you can use your arms to help you stand. Repeat ____ times.

Breathing exercises

It is particularly important to do breathing exercises if you are not able to get out of bed, this helps to maintain good airflow into your lungs and reduce the risk of developing chest infections.

- Sit in a relaxed or well supported position; relax your upper chest and shoulders. Breathe slowly in through the nose and out through the mouth, trying to get air right to the base of your lungs. If comfortable, you can put your hand on your tummy and watch it rise when you breathe in and fall when you breathe out. Take 10 relaxed breaths.
- After your relaxed breaths, take three deep, slow breaths in, trying to expand your rib cage fully.

Try to repeat this cycle regularly throughout the day.

Other exercises

Standing in front of a step, step up ___ times with one leg leading. Repeat with the other leg leading.

Walk up and down the ward/around your room/home/garden _____ times a day with assistance if required.

The information in this booklet does not replace the advice given to you by your Physiotherapist/Dietitian/Doctor/Nurse Specialist.

The advice in this booklet is suitable for most people, but everyone is different.

The contents of this booklet may differ to the information given to you by your medical team as their advice is specific to you, and your condition.

Other leaflets available in this series with more information on specific areas are:

- Pancreatic enzyme replacement therapy
- Type 3c diabetes (pancreatogenic diabetes)
- Nutrition and acute pancreatitis
- Chronic pancreatitis and your diet
- Chronic pancreatitis: high energy, high protein advice.
- Chronic pancreatitis: advice to help with constipation

Useful contacts:

Pancreatitis supporters network : www.pancreatitis.org.uk

Pancreatitis Forum: www.pancreatitis-forum.org.uk

Core: <http://corecharity.org.uk/>

www.nhs.org.uk

Diabetes UK – 0345 1232399 www.diabetes.org.uk

Alcohol concern - helpline (UK) 0300 1231110 www.alcoholconcern.org.uk

Alcoholics Anonymous – helpline (UK) 0845 7697555 www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

Al-Anon Family groups – helpline (UK) 020 74030888 www.al-anonuk.org.uk

Smoke free national helpline (UK) 0300 1231044

These websites are separate organisations, and the authors of this booklet have no control over their contents

Always be careful with information obtained from the internet, when carrying out internet searches try and stick to accredited sites.

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