

Self-help series fact sheet 9

Careful exercise

Unfortunately exercising with a chronic condition can be a double-edged sword. On one hand exercise can:

1. decrease muscle stiffness
2. help with muscle deconditioning and
3. also improve our mental health.

But on the other hand, if you do too much too quickly it can put you in a push/crash cycle that takes days, or weeks to get out of. So, you must **RESPECT YOUR NEW LIMITS**.

The principles for careful exercise are:

- Start low and go slow (maybe start with walking around the block and then increase to two blocks).
- Set realistic goals (get a pedometer or your watch and start something small such as 1K steps a day and build up each week to 5k steps).
- Monitor via logging in a diary or devices.
- Tailor your program (if necessary talk to an exercise psychologist about a tailored program).

If you need further information or support please have a look at our website at www.EmergeACT.org.au or the long COVID playlist on our YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/@arthritisact3717



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