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# MANAGING MUSCLES AND MOBILITY

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**[www.thephysioclinic.com.au](http://www.thephysioclinic.com.au)**

# Managing Muscles & Mobility

Many polio survivors can experience:

- Fatigue
- Weakness
- Pain
- Unsteadiness/ falls
- Disturbed sleep
- Breathing difficulties
- Cold intolerance

# Managing Muscles & Mobility

## Exercise may be able to help!

Exercise has many benefits, not only for the general population but also for polio survivors.

- Assists with maintaining a healthy weight
- Increases muscle strength and joint function
- Improves bone density
- Reduces inflammation & risk of chronic health conditions such as type II diabetes, high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease (stroke & heart ttask)
- Boosts immune function
- Reduces stress and improves mood
- Improves energy levels
- Reduces risk of falls
- Improves sleep
- Reduces the risk of some cancers
- Is associated with increased longevity

# Managing Muscles & Mobility

## Possible goals from exercise:

1. Improving and / or maintaining mobility and function
2. Maximising independence
3. Relief from pain
4. Providing opportunities for socialization
5. Enhancing quality of life

# Managing Muscles & Mobility

## Considerations for exercising in PPS:

- Stabilise weak limbs
- Supplement strength where necessary
- Protect vulnerable joints
- Normalise movement patterns
- Reduce unnecessary load and pain
- Accommodate ongoing muscle weakness/wasting

# Managing Muscles & Mobility

## Strength Exercises

- Weakness from Post Polio Syndrome (PPS) can be stabilized or slowed but not 'normalised'
- An individual with PPS must have anti-gravity strength to consider any increase in activity or for prescribing exercise for that muscle group
- Exercise goals in PPS centre around 'stabilising function' rather than necessarily 'getting stronger'

# Managing Muscles & Mobility

## Strength exercises should use:

- Lower resistances (intensity)
- Moderate repetitions
- Frequent rest breaks
- Only be performed every second day

# Managing Muscles & Mobility

Aerobic Exercise = walking, swimming, cycling, rowing etc

## **Aerobic Exercises should:**

- Use shorter, moderate bouts of exercise with rest intervals
- Have adequate recovery time between sessions
- Prioritise modes of exercise that support weaker limbs (eg. Hydrotherapy/Aquatics)
- Use environments that minimise potential for heat loss after exercise



# Managing Muscles & Mobility

## How do I start exercising?

Lifestyle modifications can minimise the effect of FATIGUE and allow time and energy for EXERCISE. Possible changes include:

- Prioritising tasks
- Planning ahead
- Pacing your activities (with regular rest breaks)
- Positioning yourself and your weaker limbs to provide the necessary support (possibly using orthoses)
- Delegating to others where possible

# Managing Muscles & Mobility

## **Don't be afraid to ask for help!**

Given the specific challenges faced by Polio survivors, it is recommended that exercise be prescribed and monitored by a health professional.

Possible options may include:

- Clinic-based 1:1 supervised exercise and therapy sessions with access to a range of facilities & equipment
- A tailored home exercise program (incorporating stretching, resistance bands, light weights, cycling, walking regime etc.)
- A supervised or semi-supervised gym program
- Supervised hydrotherapy classes

Therapists informed on PPS can use their expertise to guide your exercise journey

# On-Site Gymnasium

- Morning, evening & Saturday classes (45 mins)
- Supervised by a physiotherapist
- 4-5 participants in each class
- Individual programs

# Hydrotherapy

- Indoor heated pool at Welland or Findon
- Waist-deep water & step entry
- Supervised by a physiotherapists
- Individual programs

# Best wishes with starting your exercise journey.

If you wish to see one of our physiotherapists at home or in one of our clinics you can contact us on:



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