

# Physical Activity and MND



## Living with MND

**Finding ways to enjoy physical activity with MND can help, even as it gets harder to keep your body moving.**

### **Why does physical activity help with MND?**

Generally, activities like walking, gardening, yoga, stretches and others that involve physical movement can help support your physical abilities by strengthening healthy muscles whose nerves have not yet been affected by MND. Physical activity can also help maintain joint range of movement, reduce stiffness and pain and support overall wellbeing and enjoyment of daily life.



### **What you need to do first**

It's best to talk to your neurologist, GP, physiotherapist and others in your healthcare team about physical activity and how to manage:

- fatigue
- getting plenty of rest
- pain and stiffness
- aerobic, strength and endurance exercises, if they're suitable
- assistive technology for maintaining independence, mobility and comfort, if suitable.



## Many people living with MND feel that it's important to enjoy physical activity

Recent research finds that personal enjoyment of general physical activity is more motivating for some people living with MND than a more formal exercise program\*. So you may want to think about the activities you enjoy doing, and how your healthcare team can best support you to do them.

### Fatigue is an issue

It's important not to push yourself to exhaustion while exercising and to get plenty of rest after physical activity to reduce fatigue. Even daily tasks like washing, and dressing can drain energy, and you may need to rest and take time to recover. Physiotherapist and occupational therapist assessments and regular reviews can help guide you.

### What can I try?

1. Walking outside the home, housework, gardening
2. Yoga, stretching limbs with a physiotherapist, hydrotherapy (activities in a pool or water)
3. Exploring best ways to do physical activities while sitting in a bed or chair with a physiotherapist. Talking with your health professionals regarding medications that may help with discomfort
4. Stable and supportive shoes, walkers, braces, orthotics

### Being active for wellbeing

Doing physical activities that you enjoy can be a great way to feel more comfortable and happier. Physical activity may be able to help you to focus on things that you enjoy, have a break from other worries, build your confidence and sense of control, and spend time with others and feel supported by them.



### More information

Your state MND Association or an MND clinic or service

Your General Practitioner or Neurologist

Physical Activity and MND (Fact Sheet)\*

Contact the MND Association in your state or territory:

1800 777 175 or visit [www.mndaustralia.org.au](http://www.mndaustralia.org.au)

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