

EXERCISING

WITH

AN ANEURYSM



If you have a known aneurysm, exercise can be a scary prospect. However, a safe and effective exercise program may help improve your endurance level and ability to do everyday activities. The key is to determine what type of exercise is best for you and to follow a program that accommodates your individual needs and concerns.

Getting Started

- Talk with your health care practitioner before starting an exercise program and ask for specific programming recommendations.
- Take all medications as recommended by your physician.
- The goals of your program should be to increase your endurance level, joint range of motion and ability to perform activities of daily living.
- Choose activities that are comfortable and well-tolerated, such as walking, swimming, or low-intensity sports such as bowling.
- Start slowly and emphasize duration over intensity. Gradually progress to exercising 15 to 20 minutes, three or more days per week.
- All exercise training, whether aerobic or resistance, should be performed at moderate-to-low intensity.
- If you have gait or balance problems, consider adding balance-training exercises to your program.
- Some yoga activities may be useful for helping to control blood pressure. However, many yoga positions are not recommended if you have Marfan's syndrome because you may risk joint dislocation.

Exercise Cautions

- The larger the diameter of your aneurysm relative to the normal diameter of the vessel, the more your exercise should be restricted.
- Always check with your physician prior to increasing your activity level.
- Do not allow your heart rate to exceed 100 contractions per minute.
- Avoid overstretching if you have Marfan's syndrome and are hypermobile.

Your exercise program should be designed to maximize the benefits with the fewest risks of aggravating your health or physical condition. Consider contacting a certified health and fitness professional* who can work with you and your health care provider to establish realistic goals and design a safe and effective program that addresses your specific needs.

*If your health care provider has not cleared you for independent physical activity and would like you to be monitored in a hospital setting or a medical fitness facility, you should exercise only under the supervision of a certified professional. The American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) has two groups of certified fitness professionals that could meet your needs. The ACSM Certified Clinical Exercise Specialist (CES) is certified to support those with heart disease, diabetes and lung disease. The ACSM Registered Clinical Exercise Physiologist (RCEP) is qualified to support patients with a wide range of health challenges. You may locate all ACSM-certified fitness professionals by using the ProFinder at www.acsm.org.

For more information, visit www.exerciseismedicine.org or e-mail eim@acsm.org.

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