

Exercise Tips for Individuals with Heart Disease

What to wear	Wear loose fitting, comfortable clothes. Avoid rubberized or restrictive clothing that prevents evaporation of sweat. Shoes should have good support, traction, and shock absorption. Replace shoes on a regular basis; more often if you use them primarily for walking or jogging.
When to exercise	Wait 60 minutes after eating before you exercise. If you exercise outdoors in a hot climate, avoid exercising during the afternoon or hottest time of the day.
Avoid dehydration	Drink plenty of fluids (especially water) before, during and after exercise. Do not wait until you feel thirsty before taking in fluids.
Safety first	Carry a mobile phone. Let someone know your plans (route planned and estimated time). Carry nitroglycerin (if prescribed).
Extreme weather precautions	If exercising in the heat , drink 8-12 ounces of liquid every 10 to 15 minutes of exercise. Never use salt tablets because they will cause further dehydration. Adjust gradually to the heat and decrease how hard you work. Exercise outdoors during cooler periods of the day – morning or evening when the sun is low. Consider wearing light colored clothing or finding a place to exercise indoors.
	If you exercise in the cold , reduce the risk of frostbite by dressing in layers. Breathing in cold air can increase the risk of angina (chest pain) for some. Wearing a scarf or mask over your mouth and nose may be helpful. Avoid alcohol, caffeine, and nicotine before exercising, especially in extreme weather conditions. These add more stress to your heart.

Specific instructions for you:

Adapted from:

American College of Sports Medicine Position Stand Exercise for Patients with Coronary Artery Disease. *Medicine, Science, Sports, and Exercise* 1994; 26:3.

Guidelines for Cardiac Rehabilitation and Secondary Prevention Programs. American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation. Champaign, Ill: Human Kinetics; 2004.

2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans. Available at <http://www.health.gov/paguidelines> Accessed Jun. 7, 2009.

