



PREHABILITATION ADVICE FOR PATIENTS

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Introduction

You have been scheduled to have an operation. Undergoing surgery can be stressful for your body and with every operation there is a risk of complications.

We know that the risks of complications are higher in those who aren't physically prepared for surgery.

However, there are things you can do to get ready for surgery and potentially reduce the rate of complications.

What is Prehabilitation?

Prehabilitation is a means by which you can improve your general fitness for surgery. This is done by increasing your activity and performing simple exercises regularly before your operation. Research has shown that prehabilitation prepares your body to cope with the stress of surgery, can improve recovery and can reduce the risks of complications.

What type of exercise?

Prehabilitation includes any type of aerobic exercise. Aerobic exercise is any exercise that increases your heart rate. This can be low, moderate or high intensity as long as your heart rate is increased. Aerobic exercise includes cycling, jogging, swimming or brisk walking.

Any amount of exercise is better than nothing; and after that a bit more is better than a little. The NHS recommends that adults should build up to 150 minutes of moderate aerobic exercise each week; for example 30 minutes on at least 5 days of the week.

However, this exercise can be made up of a mixture of activities and intensities depending on what suits you and what you like to do.

Prehabilitation doesn't necessarily mean you have to try something new, for example, increasing the amount that you walk can make a difference to your fitness. You could try walking faster or further than you normally would. These small differences can make a big difference to your body. Being outdoors in fresh air can also increase the benefits.

**Any
form of
exercise
is better
than
none**

Think about things you like to do, and what might be available in your community.

There are some useful links on the following pages which may give you some ideas for exercise both outdoors and indoors, to prepare yourself for the surgery.



For more resources or to learn about green health visit www.thinkhealththinknature.scot

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What if I'm too sore to walk?

If you are too sore to walk then it's possible to increase your heart rate by doing other things.

If you are able low impact exercise such as cycling or using an exercise bike might be suitable. Aqua aerobics and swimming are also kinder to your joints but can get your heart rate up. Most gyms also have an arm bicycle that you use your arms to peddle and so is accessible if you are limited by pain in your hips or knees.

Is there anyway I could get help with this?

You don't have to do this by yourself, in fact exercise and prehabilitation can be social.

Think about using prehab to connect and spend time with others – friends or family, or, if you prefer being active on your own, is there someone who you can check in with to give you a wee reminder and encourage you to keep at it?

This also sets you up well for being active after your surgery.

Exercise
doesn't
have
to mean
walking



Swimming
and
Aqua Aerobics
can be kinder
to your
joints prior
to your
surgery

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Useful links



High Life Highland offer a variety of facilities and exercise classes for a wide range of abilities. These include low impact and gentle movement, short walks into nature with rangers, aqua aerobics, circuits, spinning classes and may more.

And if you're not very confident going for the first time, you can use their "Knowing Me, Knowing You" programme just to become familiar with the leisure centre and what you want to do.

Further details (including membership, costs and support for low incomes) can be found at: www.highlifehighland.org

Email enquiries to: info@highlifehighland.com



Paths for All is a Scottish charity that supports health walk groups across Highland. Health walks are free, short, safe, social, fun and accessible low level walks led by trained volunteers which are ideal for prehabilitation.

Further details can be found at:
www.pathsforall.org.uk/healthwalkfinder



Highland Green Health Partnership aims to encourage more use of the outdoors to help increase physical activity, improve mental health and wellbeing, and reduce health inequalities.

Further details can be found at:
www.thinkhealththinknature.scot

This information was produced by with Dr Eilidh Urquhart and Mr James Beastall Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, Raigmore Hospital, Inverness on behalf of Highland Green Health Partnership.

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following
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