

Tips

- Before starting aerobic activity, perform exercises which gradually increase body temperature, heart beating and breathing (i.e. warm-up exercises). After the aerobic activity, perform slow movements which gradually return the heart beating and lung breathing to their normal activity (i.e. cool-down exercises).
- It is recommended to perform exercises regularly (e.g. 3 times a week).
- People who are physical inactive can gradually increase the amount of exercise to achieve the recommended level. The intensity of exercise should be personalized in relation to the own capacity.
- The intensity of exercise can be assessed using a simple scale, which is based on self-perceived effort. The scale goes from 0 (no effort) to 10 (maximal perceived effort). A score of 5-6 defines the moderate intensity, whereas a score of 7 and more defines high intensity.

For more information **the SPRINTT project website**
www.mysprintt.eu, **the IMI website** www.imi.europa.eu

Aerobic exercise can be performed with many chronic diseases and disabilities. However, before starting exercising it is important to contact your doctor to know the type, amount, and the intensity of aerobic exercise which is best for your health status

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Aerobic Exercise



Benefit

Aerobic exercise can be performed at every age, also by older adults. The main benefits of aerobic exercises for older adult are:

- Strengthening body muscle and bones, heart and the muscles involved in breathing;
- Helping to control body weight, blood glucose levels (hence reducing the risk of diabetes), blood lipid levels (like cholesterol), and high blood pressure (i.e. reducing the risk of hypertension);
- Reducing the risk of different types of cancer (e.g. in breast or kidney) and cardiovascular diseases (i.e. stroke and heart attack);
- Helping to maintain intestinal regular activity;
- Improving mood and counteract depression and anxiety;
- Helping to maintain cognitive functions as memory and attention, and reduce the risk of dementia;
- Reducing the risk of falls and help to maintain balance and autonomy;
- Improving the quality of life and quality of sleep.



What is aerobic exercise?

Aerobic exercise includes all activities that increase heart beating and breathing, by strengthening them. It can be performed indoor (e.g. aqua gym, swimming, dancing) or outdoor (e.g. walking, jogging, biking).

Guidelines for older adults

The 2018 “Physical activity guidelines for Americans 2nd edition” developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, suggest to:

- Avoid a sedentary lifestyle because it is associated with an increased risk of mortality and more healthcare use. They recommend to perform at least a minimum level of exercise, and not to be completely inactive.
- Perform at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity exercise (e.g. walking fast, group dances) per week, or 75-150 minutes of aerobic exercises at high intensity (e.g. jogging, tennis), or a combination of both types of activity.
- To reach even more benefits, you should aim to perform more than 300 minutes of weekly exercise.
- Multicomponent exercise (i.e. a mix of balance, aerobic and strength exercises) is preferable for older people.
- When an older person can’t perform the recommended amount of exercise, for example due to a chronic disease or disability, it is still important to be as active as possible.

Useful insights

- The U.S. National Institute of Aging (NIA) website <https://www.nia.nih.gov/>
- The 2018 “Physical activity guidelines for Americans 2nd edition” https://health.gov/paguidelines/second-edition/pdf/PAG_ExecutiveSummary.pdf
- The World Health Organization recommendations (WHO) https://www.who.int/dietphysicalactivity/factsheet_olderadults/en/