

Indoor Activity

By Julia Brooks and Stacey Cave

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This year, COVID-19 has changed many people's exercise routines due to limited access to gyms, group fitness classes, and pools. Along with enjoying the outdoors through walking, running, cycling and hiking, there are many types of exercise that can be done safely in the comfort of your own home.

Connect with your hemophilia treatment centre (HTC) physiotherapist for an individualized program that suits your specific needs. They can also suggest exercise equipment to use in your home.

Equipment

Exercise equipment is available for online delivery or pick up from some of your favourite local retailers. If you can't get to the store, there are many great household and outdoor items that can substitute such as cans from the cupboard, rocks from the yard, or milk jugs filled with water. Really, the options are only limited by safety and your creativity.



Activities

Here are some great indoor activities that include suggestions that you can do depending on if you have access to a gym facility or not:

- Yoga
- Aquatic exercise
- Tai Chi
- Stationary cycling
- Dance
- Resistance training

Indoor physical activity doesn't always have to include sport or gym-specific exercises. It can involve doing something more functional like cleaning your home, playing with your kids, or re-organizing.

Yoga

Yoga can benefit many aspects of physical health including strength, flexibility, and balance. It can also offer mental health benefits including relaxation and mindfulness.

Despite being a low impact activity, it can be stressful on some joints in certain positions. There are, however, many ways to modify positions to allow you to participate regardless of your target joints.

Some examples of this include chair yoga, or using blocks, pillows, towels, rolls or benches to change where the stress is distributed in the body.

There are many great yoga videos available online. Your HTC physiotherapist is best able to direct you to what is appropriate for your body and support you to make modifications.



Aquatic Exercise

The pool is a great place for a workout. Due to buoyancy, the pool offers a safe place to move in with less compression on your joints. Both cardiovascular exercise and resistance training can be done in this environment.

- Talk to your HTC or family doctor before pursuing any aquatic exercise to ensure it is right for you.

- Ensure you are able to swim before entering a pool for physical activity.

Water walking is a low-impact workout that can get your heart rate up while keeping your joints safe. Water jogging can also offer great benefit and can be done using a floatation belt in deeper water.

Lap swimming, if done with proper form, can help to increase muscle tone and strength through the resistance water provides, as well as provide an effective cardiovascular challenge.

- Be mindful of different strokes as they can put increased pressure on different joints which can affect target joint pain and function.
- Ensure proper form is used at all times as overuse or repetitive strain injuries can occur.

AquaFit classes are a great option for all ages. There are different types offered, so make sure you read the description of each class before signing up. You can also let the instructor

know ahead of time if you have joint restrictions so they can provide different movement options for specific exercises.

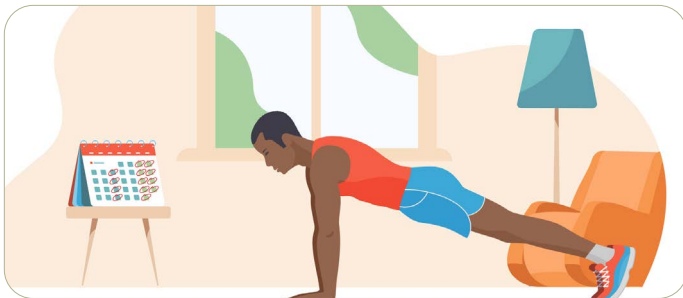
Lastly, if you have extended health benefits, physiotherapists can offer aquatic therapy or hydrotherapy options for more specific training.



Resistance Training

Resistance or strength training is one of the important pillars of a well-rounded body. While cardiovascular activities (such as walking and biking) are important for your heart and lungs, strength training provides its own important benefits.

Strength training has been shown to prevent falls, improve joint stability leading to decreased risk of bleeding, improve bone density, and increase participation in functional activities in life (such as carrying groceries or children). Many people also feel it improves their self-esteem. The key with strength training is doing it safely.



There are generally two different types of weight training. In a **hypertrophy approach**, a person wants to increase the size of their muscles and the training volume is higher, with more sets and reps. In **strength training**, you reduce the number of reps in a set while adding heavier weights. In either approach, the weights will increase as your body adapts and gets stronger.

- Resistance training can include body weight activities, weights or banded type activities.
- Aim to have at least three strength days built into your week.
- Having your HTC physiotherapist get you started is important to ensure good technique that prevents your target joints from being injured and to help make sure you have a good variety of exercises in your repertoire.

About the Authors



Julia is a Pediatric Physiotherapist at the Alberta Children's Hospital. She received her Bachelor of Medical Rehabilitation, Physical Therapy (BMRPT) in 2003 from the University of Manitoba. She has published on subjects such as Exercise Therapy in Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis, Assessment of Joint and

Muscle Bleeds, and Standards of Care and Clinical Practice Guidelines for Persons with Hemophilia. She is currently the President of the Canadian Physiotherapists in Hemophilia Care, and on the committee of the Canadian Bleeding Disorders Registry (CBDR), as well as the Parents Empowering Parents committee.



Stacey is an Adult Physiotherapist at St. Paul's Hospital in Vancouver, British Columbia. She has been working for Providence Health Care since the fall of 2012 in a variety of areas including acute, rehab, outpatients, and geriatrics. Before her hemophilia role, she worked with the Complex Pain Outpatient team where she spent several years

developing a pain self-management program with her coworkers. She continues to have an interest in complex pain management in her bleeding disorders role. She graduated from the University of British Columbia's Master of Physical Therapy program in 2012 and has returned as a Clinical Instructor with the program to continue to support the MPT students in their learning process. Stacey started with the Adult Bleeding Disorders Program in the fall of 2018. She works three days a week with the program, in conjunction with her other caseload in geriatrics.