

EXERCISE AND INTERMITTENT CLAUDICATION

Intermittent claudication is a symptom of vascular disease where there is not enough blood reaching exercising leg muscles. This can cause a range of symptoms including pain, tightness, tiredness and cramps.

To increase the circulation and reduce these symptoms it is important to try to exercise/walk a little further into your pain than you normally would, before resting and then carrying on again. Exercise therapy is the ideal initial management for this condition.

EXERCISES TO BE PERFORMED ONCE A DAY

THE 3 EXERCISES BELOW HAVE TO BE DONE FOR
5 MINUTES EACH

1. SITTING WITH LEGS SUPPORTED

PUMP ANKLES UP AND DOWN

2. SITTING IN HARD CHAIR

SLOWLY STAND AND SIT

3. STANDING

LIFT UP AND DOWN ON TIPTOES (MINIMAL SUPPORT)

4. WALKING

AS FAR AS POSSIBLE 1 OR 2 TIMES A DAY – aim for a distance requiring 5 – 6 stops.

Remember - for this programme to work you must exercise up to **AND PAST** the point of pain where you would normally stop. This is trying to create a natural bypass using the collateral circulation.

An improvement in symptoms takes time and can take up to 6 weeks to be noticeable. Perseverance with the exercises and daily walking is essential.

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