

EXERCISE IN DUCHENNE AND BECKER MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY

Exercise is used just like a medical prescription; when used correctly there are potential benefits, under medical guidance and requires caution for people with Duchenne and Becker.



Potential exercise benefits when done with professional guidance:

- Muscle function
- Heart function
- Flexibility
- Bone health
- Mental health
- Overall well-being improvements

Things to avoid:

- Fatigue
- Eccentric muscle contractions such as squats, lunges, jumping, hiking downhill, etc
- Heavy resistance
- Adding exercise to an already physically active daily routine

Remember that more is not always better with these diagnoses

Stop activity and contact your physician if muscle pain, swelling, spasms, or dark-colored urine occur.

STEPS TO START AN EXERCISE PROGRAM

1. Contact your lead neuromuscular physician for recommendations and to set realistic goals
2. Contact your cardiologist to discuss exercise; heart rate limits, cardiac medicine effects on heart response to exercise
3. Present the physicians' recommendations to your physical therapist
4. Discuss a starting point for exercise program including frequency, duration, sets and rest breaks that you are both comfortable with
5. Learn how to use your exercise equipment, heart rate monitor and rating scales before starting your exercise program
6. Be aware of the signs of excessive exercise and notify your PT or physician if you experience any of these. A brief list of these signs is listed above.



TYPES OF EXERCISE ACTIVITIES THAT MAY BE PRESCRIBED



- Assisted range-of-motion exercises for the arms and legs
- Aquatic therapy
- Arm or leg cycling (recumbent stationary or assisted mobile)
- Isometric (static) exercises
- Shoulder pulley exercises
- Power wheelchair sports such as soccer or hockey

For rehabilitation professionals, CureDuchenne offers Duchenne-specific education through www.NeuroMuscularEd.org, including webinars focused on exercise in Duchenne and opportunities for specialized certification.