

Physical activity and exercise for Kidney Transplantation

Talk to your doctor if you wish to increase your activity levels

What?



Physical activity

General physical activity should be encouraged in people with a kidney transplant without safety issues
Some activity is better than none



150 min moderate-intensity

People with a kidney transplant aim for 150 min of moderate-intensity (increased breathing, able to talk) physical activity a week or 75 min vigorous (breathing fast, difficultly talking) activity



Resistance training

Resistance (strength) training, comprising upper and lower body components, should be performed at least 2x/week



Type of exercise

People with a kidney transplant should undertake both aerobic (exercise that gets you out of breath) and resistance (strength) exercise to maximise the effects on exercise capacity and muscle function

Benefits

Research shows that structured exercise in people pre- and post-transplant will contribute to the following:



Improved health-related quality of life



Reduced risk of cardiovascular-related and all-cause mortality (death)



Improved cardiorespiratory fitness



Improved muscular strength and physical function



Prehabilitation for transplantation

Exercise prior to transplant surgery (prehabilitation) may help increase physical activity levels and aid recovery post-transplant



Safety and contraindications

People with a kidney transplant should avoid traumatic damage to the transplanted kidney and participation in contact sports (e.g., rugby) and/or prolonged extreme exercise (e.g., marathons) must be considered carefully

Other lifestyle considerations



Smoking

Individuals with a kidney transplant should stop smoking



Alcohol

It is recommended alcohol consumption should be within national guidelines



Drugs

It is recommended that individuals avoid all recreational drug use

Recommendations taken from the UK Kidney Association Clinical Practice Guidelines for Exercise and Lifestyle in CKD (Baker, March, Wilkinson et al., 2022)