

Moving More at the Right Pace

How do you know if you're overdoing it? A simple rule is the "Talk/Sing Test". You should be able to breathe comfortably, deep and rhythmically at all times during physical activity. If you're breathing so hard that you can't easily talk, your activity is too intense. On the other hand, if you are so comfortable that you could sing, you may benefit from picking up the pace a bit.

BORG SCALE OF PERCEIVED EXERTION	
Description of Rating of Perceived Exertion (RPE)	
6	
7	Very, very light
8	
9	Very light
10	
11	Fairly light
12	
13	Somewhat hard
14	
15	Hard
16	
17	Very hard
18	
19	Very, very hard
20	

The Borg Scale of Perceived Exertion is an easy way to know if you're working too hard or too easy. Here's how it works.

If you're exercising at a level that you think of as fairly hard, you might feel you have an RPE of 13. If you're huffing and puffing, you would probably choose an RPE of 17. If you're just

starting to increase your physical activity, don't go beyond an RPE of 13. Gradually increase your intensity to 15, but don't go beyond 17.

WARMING UP/COOLING DOWN

Warming up before exercise prepares the heart and other muscles for the activity ahead. Warm up several minutes before beginning your physical activity routine. Beginning each workout by doing a slower, gentle version of the activity that you plan to do.

Cool down is just as important. If you are exercising hard and suddenly stop, you might get stiff muscles, feel weak and dizzy or even pass out. Cool down by walking or performing slow stretches for 5 - 10 minutes.

KNOWING WHEN TO STOP

Learn the signs and symptoms of overexertion and always pay attention to your body. Stop exercising immediately if any of these symptoms occur and see your doctor before starting to exercise again.

- ◆ Pain or pressure in the chest, abdomen, neck, jaw or arms.
- ◆ Unaccustomed shortness of breath.
- ◆ Nausea or vomiting.
- ◆ Dizziness or fainting.
- ◆ Irregular pulse.
- ◆ Extreme fatigue.
- ◆ Slow recovery from exercise.

