

What MOVES You



Neuropathy & Exercise

What is neuropathy?

Neuropathy is a condition that affects the nerves, causing symptoms like numbness, tingling, and pain. It can happen when the nerves are damaged or not functioning properly. It can affect different parts of the body, such as the hands, feet, or legs, and may make it difficult to feel sensations or move comfortably.

Why is exercise important for those with neuropathy?

Exercise can be helpful for people with neuropathy, making everyday activities easier and more enjoyable. Remember to talk to a healthcare professional before starting any exercise program.

Benefits of exercise for those with neuropathy:

- Regular exercise improves blood flow to the nerves, potentially reducing neuropathy symptoms such as numbness, tingling, and pain.
- Engaging in physical activity can help maintain or improve nerve function, potentially slowing down the progression of neuropathy.
- Exercise increases the release of endorphins, natural pain-relieving chemicals that can help alleviate neuropathic pain.
- Physical activity enhances muscle strength and flexibility, which can improve balance and reduce the risk of falls for individuals with neuropathy.



OVARIAN.ORG
888-OVARIAN
NOCC@OVARIAN.ORG

What MOVES You



Neuropathy & Exercise

What types of exercise help those with neuropathy?

- Low-Impact Aerobic Exercises: Walking, swimming, cycling, and water aerobics are gentle on the joints and help improve circulation without putting excessive stress on the feet or legs.
- Stretching and Flexibility Exercises: Gentle stretching exercises, yoga, tai chi, or Pilates can improve flexibility, reduce muscle stiffness, and enhance balance.
- Balance and Coordination Exercises: Balance exercises like standing on one leg, using a balance board, or practicing tai chi can help improve stability and reduce the risk of falls.
- Neuromuscular Exercises: These exercises focus on stimulating nerve-muscle connections and may include activities like ankle pumps, finger taps, or hand and foot exercises.

Example 30-minute exercise routine for those with neuropathy

Warm-up (5 minutes):

- Start with a gentle 5-minute walk on a flat surface to warm up your muscles and increase blood flow.



OVARIAN.ORG
888-OVARIAN
NOCC@OVARIAN.ORG

What MOVES You



Neuropathy & Exercise

Example 30-minute exercise routine for those with neuropathy

Aerobic Exercise (10 minutes):

- Perform 10 minutes of low-impact aerobic exercise, such as walking at a comfortable pace or using a stationary bike. Maintain a steady pace and focus on proper form.

Balance and Coordination (10 minutes):

Practice balance exercises:

- Stand on one leg for 30 seconds, then switch to the other leg.
- Use a balance board or ball for 1 minute (if available), maintaining stability. If no equipment is available, try rolling up a towel and standing unevenly to practice balance.
- Perform slow and controlled leg swings forward and backward, 10 swings on each leg.

Cool-down and Stretching (5 minutes):

- Finish with a 5-minute cool-down period, gradually decreasing your activity level.
- Stretch major muscle groups, holding each stretch for 20-30 seconds. Focus on areas such as calves, hamstrings, quadriceps, shoulders, and neck.

Remember to listen to your body and adjust the intensity of each exercise based on your comfort level. **You should always talk with a healthcare professional and a certified exercise specialist before starting any new exercise routine, especially if you have neuropathy issues.**



OVARIAN.ORG
888-OVARIAN
NOCC@OVARIAN.ORG