**Get Back to Exercising After Ostomy Surgery**

By Coloplast Customer Care, featured on [ostomyconnection.com](http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001-19TNZCVdABbU5kjm-8pOJZ3PTT_lU6syUYlHJ5_UQbHXvUriIUAC0Z8kOSpUpdIhlv8_XwDkZRg_Vjn4XInhYe93QX5jTTMP4FoSmAJ-lRbbjs-SjIKlCjoezhRd_oavX426rWwCM3ErIMksb3P7Uf7oiXFLCGtdz6t48e0OXX1j6DPD7nOxQ==&c=DMyYS4N51jcPDDTDiE-shUfjMIi7Iw9BttYLPTdCLQBPf5FnR494HA==&ch=j7_NOQWJdF1prE9SykSN9NuCPXiiLRvQcplvckxFc8mLgOPRmgZd3g==)

In the months after your surgery, exercising can really help speed up recovery, as the physical activity gives you more energy and makes you stronger and better prepared to deal with illnesses. Also, exercise can prevent complications related to sitting or lying down too long.

**Are there limits to what I can do?**

Until your ostomy and abdominal area are fully healed, physical activities can put you at risk for a hernia. A parastomal hernia is a bulge that forms if the bowel is pushed through a weak area in the abdominal wall, which normally holds the bowel in place.

To reduce the risk of a hernia, you should avoid any kind of heavy lifting (anything more than 7-8 pounds, really) for the first six weeks after your surgery.

**What is a good exercise I can start with?**

Walking is a good way to start; it is an easy, gentle way to get back into exercise. Even though you may be used to playing sports, it can be a good idea to start out slowly - especially if you recently had your surgery.

Whether you walk inside (i.e. up and down stairs), or outside in the fresh air, it is an activity that you can gradually increase in both speed and distance. And soon your strength and endurance will return and you'll be ready to do more challenging exercise, just like before.

Note: Check with your doctor or your Wound, Ostomy, Continence (WOC) Nurse before you start exercising, or increase activity level.  What's good for one person may be too much for someone else.

**How can I motivate myself to get started exercising?**

It is never easy to start a new habit. But if you sense that your mind is trying to make excuses before you start exercising, try to make a point of not listening to the excuse and act on your decision instead. Instead, listen very carefully to your body afterwards - almost everyone feels better after exercise.

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