



Tip Sheet

Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS)



10 Tips for Exercising

Empowering Community and Removal of Barriers (ECRoB)

Regular exercise is essential for maintaining overall health and well-being, even for individuals with Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS). However, it's essential to approach exercise in a way that accommodates your specific needs and limitations. Here are some tips to help you incorporate exercise into your routine safely and comfortably:

1. **Consult with your healthcare professional:** Before starting any exercise program, consult your healthcare provider or a qualified exercise specialist who understands your specific condition. They can guide suitable exercises and help you develop a personalized plan.
2. **Choose low-impact activities:** Opt for low-impact exercises that minimize stress on your joints and respiratory system. Examples include walking, swimming, cycling, yoga, Tai Chi, gentle stretching, and seated exercises. These activities can improve cardiovascular fitness, strength, flexibility, and balance without exacerbating symptoms.
3. **Pace yourself:** Start slowly and gradually increase the duration and intensity of your workouts. Listen to your body and rest when needed. Finding the right balance between challenging yourself and avoiding overexertion or triggering symptoms is essential.
4. **Create a safe and comfortable exercise environment:** Choose an exercise environment that minimizes exposure to triggers. Consider exercising in well-ventilated spaces, away from chemical irritants, allergens, fragrances, and odors of chemicals. If outdoor exercise is preferable, select locations with clean air and low pollution levels.
5. **Modify exercises to suit your abilities:** Adapt exercises based on your specific capabilities and limitations. Use assistive devices or adaptive equipment as needed to enhance stability, support, or accessibility. Seek guidance from a physical or occupational therapist to learn appropriate modifications for your condition.
6. **Incorporate breathing techniques:** Practice deep breathing exercises during your workouts to enhance relaxation, reduce stress, and improve respiratory function. Breathing exercises can help while having symptoms and promote a sense of calm during exercise.



7. **Stay hydrated:** Drink plenty of water before, during, and after exercise to stay hydrated. Proper hydration is essential for maintaining optimal body function and preventing overheating.
8. **Listen to your body:** Pay attention to how your body responds during and after exercise. If you experience any discomfort, pain, or adverse reactions, modify or stop the activity and seek medical advice if necessary.
9. **Set realistic goals:** Establish realistic and achievable exercise goals based on your abilities and current fitness level. Celebrate small accomplishments and progress, and remember that consistency is key for long-term benefits.
10. **Incorporate variety and enjoyment:** Keep your exercise routine diverse and enjoyable to stay motivated. Explore different activities, join supportive exercise groups or classes, or engage in activities that bring you joy and help maintain your interest in regular exercise.

Remember, every individual's needs and capabilities are unique. It is essential to work closely with your healthcare team to tailor an exercise plan that suits your specific circumstances and ensures your safety. By incorporating regular exercise into your routine, you can improve your physical fitness, boost your mood, and enhance your overall well-being.