

How Should I Exercise With Symptoms?

Let's say you've seen a healthcare practitioner and have been diagnosed with a condition that responds well to exercise. It's not always so simple, especially when you're still feeling symptoms. How can you effectively manage your symptoms while still being as active as possible?

The Exercise Traffic Light

The Exercise Traffic Light is a decision-making tool to help you figure out what might be too much, too little, or just the right amount when exercising with symptoms. This tool should be used to assess symptom response during and up to 24 hours post-exercise. Here's how it works:



The Red Light

Your symptoms have gradually increased during exercise and are now escalating or above "tolerable." Try decreasing one or more of these variables:

- Resistance
- Volume (sets, repetitions)
- Speed
- Range of motion

Re-assess your symptoms post-exercise. If it's no worse off in the next 24 hours, you have effectively managed your symptoms.

The Yellow Light

Your symptoms are present, but they aren't increasing. As time passes, symptoms stay stable. Continue with the current exercise prescription.

Re-assess your symptoms post-exercise.

The Green Light

Your symptoms have gradually decreased during exercise. What more could you ask for?! Continue with the current exercise prescription OR consider increasing one of these variables (if applicable towards target goal):

- Resistance
- Volume (sets, repetitions)
- Speed
- Range of motion

Re-assess your symptoms post-exercise.