

Week-by-week Exercise Plan for the Newly Sober

Here's a **specific exercise program** tailored for recovering from alcoholism. It's designed to be gentle yet effective, providing structure, mood support, and physical rejuvenation while respecting the body's healing process. This program combines cardiovascular exercise, strength training, flexibility, and mindfulness.

1. **Hydration:** Always carry water to rehydrate your body, as alcohol can leave you chronically dehydrated. Electrolytes are important. See NUTRITION
2. **Nutrition:** Pair your workouts with nutrient-dense meals to rebuild strength. See NUTRITION TAB ON HOMEPAGE
3. **Journaling:** Track your workouts and how you feel afterward to recognize progress.
4. **Recovery Time:** If you feel overly fatigued, prioritize rest and speak with a healthcare provider if needed.

Week 1-2: Foundation Phase (Light and Accessible) * Focus on staying hydrated and nourished

- **Goal:** Build consistency, avoid overexertion, and focus on enjoyment.
- **Schedule:** Exercise 3-4 days per week.

Day 1: Gentle Cardio (5-30 min)

- Walk at a moderate pace or use a stationary bike. Maybe just going outside is a start (I get sponsees to send a picture hugging a tree each day - or a dog - you get the idea!)
- If walking, aim for a distance depending on your fitness level.

Day 2: Stretch and Strength (20 min)

- 5 minutes: Light stretching (focus on major muscle groups like hamstrings, shoulders, and back).
- 15 minutes: Bodyweight exercises (1-2 sets of each):
 - Wall push-ups (10-12 reps)
 - Chair squats (8-10 reps)
 - Standing leg lifts (10 per leg)
 - Light bicep curls with water bottles (optional).

Day 3: Rest or Light Activity

- Take a short walk, try gentle yoga, Pilates or explore new exercise.

Day 4: Mind-Body Connection (15-20 min) SEE MEDITATIONS TAB ON HOME PAGE

- Practice yoga or tai chi (use beginner YouTube videos or attend a local class).
- Deep breathing exercises: 5-10 minutes of slow, deep breaths to reduce stress.

Week 3-4: Building Strength and Endurance

- **Goal:** Gradually increase intensity and duration while maintaining consistency.
- **Schedule:** Exercise 4-5 days per week.

Day 1: Moderate Cardio (30-40 min)

- Brisk walking, jogging (if comfortable), or low-impact cycling.
- Try intervals: Walk briskly for 1 minute, then slower for 2 minutes, repeat.

Day 2: Strength Training (25 min)

- 5 minutes: Dynamic warm-up (e.g., arm circles, gentle side lunges).
- 20 minutes: Bodyweight exercises (2-3 sets):
 - Regular push-ups or wall push-ups (10-12 reps)
 - Step-ups on a sturdy surface (10 per leg)
 - Plank (hold for 10-20 seconds)
 - Side leg raises (10 per leg)
 - Light dumbbell rows or water-bottle rows (10-12 reps per side).

Day 3: Rest or Active Recovery

- Gentle yoga, stretching, or a 15-minute slow walk.

Day 4: Flexibility and Balance (20 min)

- Yoga or pilates, focusing on poses like downward dog, warrior poses, or seated stretches.

- Practice balance exercises like standing on one leg (10 seconds per leg).

Day 5: Social or Group Activity

- Attend a group exercise class or join a walking group for accountability and connection.

Week 5-6: Progress and Routine

- **Goal:** Increase intensity slightly, integrate longer sessions, and improve overall fitness.
- **Schedule:** Exercise 5-6 days per week.

Day 1: Cardiovascular Endurance (40-50 min)

- Walk, jog, or cycle at a steady pace, aiming for more distance or time.
- Alternate with hiking for variety.

Day 2: Strength Training (30 min)

- Add light dumbbells (3-5 lbs) for resistance.
- Include core exercises, like crunches (10-12 reps) or seated twists (10 per side).

Day 3: Active Recovery

- Yoga, tai chi, stretching, etc.

Day 4: High-Intensity Cardio (20 min)

- Try intervals: 1 min of brisk walking/jogging, 1 min recovery. Repeat 8-10 times.

Day 5: Strength & Flexibility Combo (30 min)

- Combine strength training with yoga or stretching to build endurance and flexibility.

Day 6: Outdoor Activity or Fun Movement

- Play a sport, take a dance class, or go for a longer hike.

Day 7: Rest

- Use the day for reflection, hydration, and self-care.

