

# Determining Exercise Intensity Levels Using the Perceived Exertion Scale

While doing physical activity, rate your perception of exertion. This feeling should reflect how heavy and strenuous the exercise feels to you, combining all sensations and feelings of physical stress, effort, and fatigue. Do not concern yourself with any one factor such as leg pain or shortness of breath, but try to focus on your total feeling of exertion.

Look at the rating scale to the right while you are engaging in an activity; it ranges from 6 to 20, where 6 means "no exertion at all" and 20 means "maximal exertion." Choose the number from below that best describes your level of exertion. This will give you a good idea of the intensity level of your activity, and you can use this information to speed up or slow down your movements to reach your desired range.

**Most generally agree that perceived exertion ratings between 12 to 14 on this scale suggests that physical activity is being performed at a moderate level of intensity. Ask you doctor if this is ok.**

- 6 No exertion at all
- 7 Extremely light
- 8
- 9 Very light - (easy walking slowly at a comfortable pace)
- 10
- 11 Light
- 12
- 13 Somewhat hard (It is quite an effort; you feel tired but can continue)
- 14
- 15 Hard (heavy)
- 16
- 17 Very hard (very strenuous, and you are very fatigued)
- 18
- 19 Extremely hard (You can not continue for long at this pace)
- 20 Maximal exertion