



Making Exercises Harder

To get the most out of the exercises you're doing, you want to challenge yourself. Pushing yourself harder using the Rating of Perceived Exertion scale, increasing the number of repetitions you do of an exercise, and adding resistance or weight to make it tougher are all ways you can get stronger and recover faster from your illness.

Ask yourself: "What do I already have at home to make my exercises more challenging?"

Household Items to Use Instead of Weights

1 pound (0.45 kilos)

- 16 oz water bottle or bag of coffee beans (~1 lb / 0.45 kg)
- 15 oz can of food (~1 lb / 0.45 kg)

Unless you are severely deconditioned, push yourself to do more as soon as possible!

3-5 pounds (1.3 to 2.2 kilos)

- Standard bag of apples (~3 lb / 1.3 kg)
- 2L bottle of soda (~5 lb / 2.2 kg)
- 72 oz jug of laundry detergent (~5 lb / 2.2 kg)
- 5 pound bag of potatoes or onions (~5 lb / 2.2 kg)

7-10 pounds (3.1 to 4.5 kilos)

- 1 gallon of olive oil (~7.6 lb / 3.45 kg)
- 1 gallon of whole milk (~8.6 lb / 3.9 kg)
- 12 inch cast iron skillet (~8 lb / 3.6 kg)
- 6 pack of soda cans (9.3 lb / 4.2 kg)
- 10 pound bag of sugar, flour, rice, etc (10 lb / 4.5 kg)

12-15 pounds (5.4 to 6.8 kilos)

- 1 gallon of paint in a can (~11-12 lb / 4.9-5.4 kg)
- 1 gallon of plain garden soil (~ 12 lb / 5.4 kg)
- 1 gallon milk jug filled with sand (~13-14 lb / 5.86.3 kg)
- 15 cans of food in a bag or box (~15 lbs / 6.8 kg)

Other Thoughts & Ideas

For standing exercises: do them on a less stable surface, like a folded towel, soft soil or sand. Keep something nearby to support you if needed, like a chair or wall. You can also try to slow them down while keeping the same weight.

For balancing exercises: use a less stable surface, as above, or try closing your eyes.

For supine (on your back) or sitting exercises: increase the speed without sacrificing quality, or slow it down a lot to make the muscles work harder for longer, increasing your endurance. Try this with marching or weighted overhead arm movements, for example.

If you start holding your breath after adding weights or other changes to make an exercise harder, try taking deep, even breaths while you do it instead. If you're still holding your breath, or are short of breath, decrease the intensity or wait on making those changes.