

# How do you know if the intensity of your effort is adequate?

Use the **scale of perceived exertion** shown below to evaluate your level of breathlessness between 0-10. Then, using the same scale, evaluate the intensity of your muscular fatigue.

## Scale of perceived exertion

Intensity of the sensation (breathlessness, fatigue)



**0** None at all

**1** Very light

**2** Light

**3** Moderate

**4** Somewhat severe

**5** Severe

**6** More severe

**7** Very severe

**8**

**9** Very, very severe

**10** Maximal

*Adapted from the Borg scale<sup>6</sup>*

Start at a comfortable pace. It is normal to experience slight breathlessness. It is recommended to perform your exercises at a level of breathlessness and fatigue between **4 and 6 on a scale of 10**. For example, at this level, you should be able to respond to somebody, but not to carry on a conversation.

### Important:

**Do not go over level 6 of the scale.** If you go over level 6, the intensity of your effort is too high.

## Integrating an exercise program into your life

### Learn to recognize your limits

#### Which normal and abnormal symptoms can occur during exercise?

##### Normal symptoms

- Light to moderate breathlessness
- Sweating
- Fatigue or burning in your legs
- Light muscular or joint pain

If you do not experience any of these symptoms, the intensity of your workout may be insufficient.

##### Abnormal symptoms

- Chest pain
- Intense joint pain
- Dizziness or vertigo
- Heart palpitations
- Severe and prolonged breathing difficulties
- Headaches

If you experience one or more of these symptoms, stop your exercise program temporarily and contact your doctor and/or your healthcare professional.

### Other chronic diseases

If you suffer from other chronic disorders such as diabetes, arthritis, osteoporosis and/or heart disease, you can still take part in an exercise program.

- You should know that exercise is also an integral part of the treatment of these diseases.
- However, some activities may need to be adapted so that they can be beneficial without posing any health risks.

If you need to, you can consult your healthcare professional to identify which exercises are appropriate for you.