



## How hard am I pushing myself? *How do I know what is too much*

One of the biggest questions you may have as you recover is **"How much is too much?"**

The Rating of Perceived Exertion (RPE) helps you figure out how hard you feel like you're stressing your body while doing an activity, whether that's climbing stairs or going for a jog. It's also known as the Borg scale after Gunnar Borg, the psychologist who developed it many years ago. The modified 0-10 scale below is a simple version for you to use on a regular basis, especially if you experience shortness of breath.

This scale is also very useful if other measures of how hard you're working, like your heart rate, aren't accurate. That can happen when you're taking medications that lower the heart rate, like beta blockers.

### Rating of Perceived Exertion / The Modified Borg Scale

- 0 Nothing at all, no effort**
- 0.5 Very, very slight, barely noticeable**
- 1 Very slight**
- 2 Slight level of effort**
- 3 Moderate level of effort**
- 4 Somewhat hard**
- 5 Hard**
- 6**
- 7 Very hard**
- 8**
- 9 Very, very hard, almost the most you can push yourself**
- 10 Maximal effort, the most breathless you've ever been or could imagine being**

Ask yourself: *How hard is it to catch my breath right now? How tired do I feel? How hard am I finding it to do this activity or exercise?*

We know testing your physical limits will help you recover faster, so aim to be exercising between a 4 and 7 to do so. Use techniques like pursed lip breathing, if needed, to help with shortness of breath.

The more often you monitor yourself, the better you'll be able to notice as daily activities get easier, and to figure out when you're ready to ramp up the intensity of your exercise.