



KNOW YOUR LIMITS:

## High Gains and Low Impact

**W**hen envisioning fitness routines, do you imagine grueling workouts that leave you sore for days? Please rest assured knowing that there's more options. High-impact exercises can be tough on your joints, especially your knees and shoulders. Alternatively, there's a wide array of effective, low-impact exercises that are gentle on the body. Consider the following joint friendly exercises to stay fit without risk of pain and injury.

### YOGA

People of all ages enjoy yoga. Why? Because it's a practice that strengthens mind and body. Yoga has long been noted and celebrated as a series of movements and poses which enhance strength and calmness.

#### BENEFITS OF YOGA PRACTICE:

- Relieves back pain
- Improves strength and balance
- Increases flexibility
- Promotes feelings of relaxation
- Mitigates stress
- Increasing energy levels

Starting a yoga practice can be easy and convenient. There are many resources such as YouTube videos, fitness apps, and yogis that can help you incorporate a daily practice of yoga. Keep in mind that with nice weather, you may be able to find outdoor yoga classes in your area.



#### FOLLOW THE MOUSE:

We've hyperlinked resources you may want to access. Just hover and click!

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## TAI CHI

Did you know that Tai Chi is a Chinese martial art? It's a series of movements performed in slow motion, so it has a very low-impact on your joints. Unlike other exercises, Tai Chi is performed without contracting muscles. Rather, practitioners exercise their muscles in a relaxed state. Tai Chi also involves breath work called qigong, which is a mindful practice, incorporating gentle breathing combined with movement.

People who practice Tai Chi may benefit from improved flexibility, balance, strength, and aerobic conditioning. You may find videos or YouTube or an app to help you get started. And with summer in full swing, it's easy to find outdoor classes.

## SWIMMING

Looking for a seasonal outdoor workout that's kind to your joints? It turns out spending time in the pool isn't just for cooling off from the heat of the sun; it is a perfect low-impact, full-body workout. The seemingly weightless feeling you experience in the pool is precisely what makes it so great for people who need low-impact movements - the water literally removes the weight off your joints.

If you're interested in finding out more on low-impact exercise, visit the BCBSIL blog post: [Find Out If a Low-Intensity Workout Is Right for You.](#)



SOURCES: [HopkinsMedicine.org](#), [Health.Harvard.edu](#), [KaiserPermanente.org](#), [Heart.org](#)

## OFFICE EXERCISES

You're not alone if you have trouble finding ways to exercise during the workday—especially if you find yourself sitting at a desk most of the time. Below are four suggestions you may consider incorporating into your daily routine:

**1. Take the stairs.** If you work in an office building, you may routinely use the elevator. Think twice next time. Taking the stairs can get your heart pumping, making it an easy way to add fitness to your day.

**2. Go on a quick walk around the office or the block.** If you've been stationary for hours get up and go for a quick walk. If you're collaborating with someone in another department, this is the perfect opportunity to walk over and talk to them in person. Or you can take a quick walk outside to get in some fresh air.



**3. Do [chair yoga](#).** You don't have to get a yoga mat and change into exercise gear to practice yoga. There are several yoga poses you can practice from the comfort of your desk chair.



**4. Try the [American Heart Association's "10-Minute Workout Anywhere"](#).** This workout routine helps get you on your feet and gets your heart pumping. Try a circuit of shoulder rolls, squats, calf raises, side bends, and several other exercises you can do in ten minutes. Switch up your exercises to keep things interesting if you choose to incorporate this workout into your workday.

