

Tips on Living an Active Lifestyle as a Disabled Senior



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Having a disability as a senior poses its own set of issues, but for the [nearly 50 million](#) Americans estimated by the National Service Inclusion Project living with a disability, some of the biggest challenges come in the smallest packages. For instance, finding new and different ways to stay active without the routine becoming boring can be extremely difficult, especially if you're used to dealing with it all alone.

When we lose interest in something, particularly exercise, it quickly affects our [motivation](#) and can lead to stress, anxiety, or depression. Anyone with a disability knows the importance of not letting that disability define you, which is why it's even more important to maintain your motivation and physical activity. [MORC](#) offers some of the best tips on how to stay active and keep it fun and engaging.

Get others involved.

Exercise and physical activity is always more fun when you have someone to do it with, so get your family involved by asking them to play a game outdoors. Depending on your physical ability, you can participate in a variety of sports activities. Just about any sport or activity can be adapted to meet your abilities, so the hardest part will be picking which one you enjoy the most.

Ask some friends to start an exercise group that meets up a few times a week. Even if everyone has their own personal workout routine, Experience Life suggests that simply being together in a [group](#) is enough to boost your self-esteem, as well as foster friendships and accountability. You might even take the opportunity to rekindle an old friendship.

If you lost touch with someone from back in the day, there are online tools to help you reconnect. For example, sites like ClassFinders.com can help you [locate and connect](#) with old classmates. Use the time together to focus on a particular area of your body with resistance training or flexibility exercises. This is your time, so make the most of it and enjoy the company.

You can also let your pet motivate you. Dogs can be extremely great motivators and can help get you moving even when you don't feel like it -- remember, they are almost always up for a walk or a game of fetch. If you don't already have a pet, consider getting a service dog that can help you with everyday tasks and provide comfort when you're feeling stressed or anxious.

Make small changes.

You don't have to do something drastic to make your activity routine less boring; sometimes, just changing the scenery can help. If you belong to a gym, try new machines or give a class such as [water aerobics](#) a try. Talk with the instructors and gym staff about how you can alter the class or equipment for your participation. They will not only offer tips and advice, but ensure it is done in a safe and supportive manner.

If you workout at home, try moving your [exercise outdoors](#) to increase energy and revitalization, and lower feelings of depression or tension. In addition, sun exposure in moderation can help you sleep better, improve immune function, and increase the production of feel-good endorphins. Switching things up a little can really help you get excited about your physical health again.

Incorporate fun.

There are plenty of fun things you can do to get in shape and burn calories that incorporate activities you already love with a personal twist, such as [adaptive sports](#), [hand cycling](#), or swimming. Try one of these activities at least once a week to keep yourself from getting bored, and consider taking a class to learn the best ways to do them safely.

It's important for your continued health to make sure you stay active and vital, and that includes beating boredom where exercise is concerned. Make a plan, talk to your friends and loved ones about joining you, and remember to have fun!

*[MORC](#) is a human services organization that coordinates long-term supports for individuals with physical and developmental disabilities and the elderly in Southeast Michigan. Reach out today to find out more! **866-807-6940***