



# Disability and Exercise Training: Key Steps for Health Care and Exercise Professionals

## PROMOTING QUALITY PARTICIPATION IS KEY TO ENCOURAGING LONG-TERM PARTICIPATION IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



### Communicating and Gathering Information

When communicating with a client, take a participant-centred approach, 'inter-viewing,' not 'interviewing' the patient to foster quality participation and build reciprocity. Reframe pre-assessment questions with a biopsychosocial lens to balance power dynamics.

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### Pre-Assessment Considerations and Contraindications

Before conducting a fitness assessment, understand common considerations, contraindications, and differential physiological responses to exercise. Note that anthropometric measurements may require adaptations. Critical thinking is key here.

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### Conducting Fitness Assessments

When choosing the protocol, consider the client's unique abilities, skills, and needs. Understand the types of fitness assessments (normative and criterion referenced) to select the best approach, considering equipment availability, modified protocols, and goals.

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### Interpreting and Using Fitness Assessment Results

When interpreting and using fitness assessment results, focus on emphasizing strengths rather than pathologizing deficits. Some clients may not be able to follow assessment protocols exactly, but their progress can still be measured.

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### Prescribing Exercise

When prescribing exercise, review general and disability-specific recommendations. In general, keep the client's goals, the nature of their disability, secondary conditions and contraindications, environment, and access to equipment in mind.

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### Adapting Exercise

When making adaptations, consider quality participation, exercise adaptation strategies, and equipment adaptation strategies. Some exercise adaptation strategies include Newell's Model of Constraints, cueing, and barrier identification.

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