



Exercise Program

The following notes are intended to provide guidance for physicians and patients as to what constitutes an appropriate minimum exercise program for the purposes of administering the PBS restriction for TNF α antagonists for ankylosing spondylitis.

The minimum exercise program should include:

Stretch and range of motion exercises five times per week;

AND EITHER

(a) Aerobic exercise of at least 20 minutes duration at least three times per week;

or

(b) A group exercise class at least one time per week.

Suitable stretch and range of motion exercise include, but are not limited to, those recommended by the National Ankylosing Spondylitis Society Guidebook for Patients "*A Positive Response to Ankylosing Spondylitis*" (available at www.nass.co.uk).

Suitable aerobic activities include, but are not limited to: aqua-aerobics, cycling, exercise classes, swimming, tennis, walking.

The details of the recommended exercise program should be recorded in the patient records.

Where possible, patients should be reviewed by a registered physiotherapist.

The patient should complete an exercise program self-certification form detailing the program followed and the dates over which it was followed. This form is available as part of the supporting information form for an initial application for a TNF α antagonist for ankylosing spondylitis and must be included with the initial application. Forms are available at www.medicareaustralia.gov.au. The prescribing doctor will be required to confirm that, to the best of their knowledge, the patient has followed the exercise program detailed in the self-certification form.

If a patient is unable to complete the minimum exercise program, the application for authority approval must detail the clinical reasons for this and detail what, if any, exercise program has been followed.