

Active Script

What is it?

Medical director and MedTech 32 have a built in Physical Activity Module (PAM), which is a brief electronic intervention tool consisting of 3 main parts:

- a physical activity assessment
- an activity prescription
- a patient information sheet

The module aims to support and prompt GPs to provide timely and effective physical activity advice to patients.

Can be completed in 2 – 3 minutes.



Why use it?

Active Script has been developed to address the serious health problem of physical inactivity, which is associated with adverse health outcomes, such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, some cancers, osteoarthritis, osteoporosis and falls in the elderly. Given that many of these patients are seen by GPs and consider their doctor as the most preferred source of advice about physical activity, the general practice setting is an important one for promoting physical activity.

Which patients are suitable?

The PAM can be used for all adult patients over the age of 18, however patients who will most benefit from physical activity should be identified. This includes patients who have or are at risk of coronary heart disease; are overweight; are hypertensive; are at risk of osteoporosis; suffer from or are at risk of diabetes; and who have symptoms of anxiety or depression. Maximum health benefits are achieved when people are moved from **sedentary** to **moderate** levels of activity.

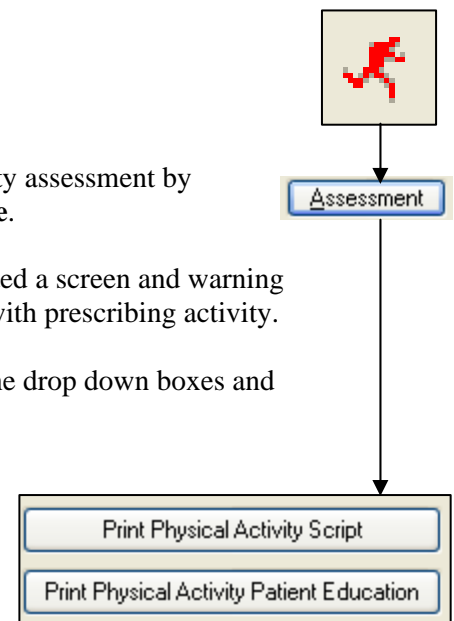
Which patients are unsuitable?

Patients with the following should not participate in non-medically supervised physical activity until their condition is stabilised:

- | | |
|---|---|
| • Unstable Angina | • Untreated Heart Failure |
| • Resting heart rate >100bpm | • Severe aortic stenosis |
| • Uncontrolled diabetes | • Acute infection or fever |
| • Recent complicated myocardial infarctions (within 3 months) | • Symptoms such as chest discomfort and shortness of breath on low activity |
| • Uncontrolled hypertension | |

Using Active Script in Medical Director (summary)

1. Click on the **Physical Activity Prescription** icon.
2. Click on the **Assessment** button to answer a 2-question physical activity assessment by dragging a slider to an appropriate score. When complete click on **Save**.
3. If the patient suffers from a condition in which activity is contraindicated a screen and warning appears. This can be overridden if the GP would still like to continue with prescribing activity.
4. Fill out the **Physical Activity Prescription** screen by selecting from the drop down boxes and by free typing into the **Referral details** and **Other reasons**.
5. Select a **Recall** date or accept the 3-month default.
6. Print the script on prescription paper and the patient information on plain paper.



The goal is to accumulate 30 minutes or more of moderate intensity physical activity on most days of the week.

Active Script in Medical Director

The Physical Activity Assessment screen

Patients are asked to answer the two assessment questions on the physical activity assessment screen to identify their current level of physical activity. A patient's activity level is calculated by using the mouse to drag the cursor to the number identified by the patient. Once the two questions have been answered a score will appear representing the level of physical activity the patient has achieved.

The screenshot shows a 'Physical Activity Assessment' window with two questions. Question 1 asks about 20 minutes of vigorous physical activity, and question 2 asks about 30 minutes of brisk walking or moderate physical activity. Both questions have a scale from 0 to 7. The score is currently 5 (Active). Below the questions, there is explanatory text about the recommended level of physical activity and a note that a score of 5 or more indicates the patient is doing the recommended amount of activity per week.

The Contraindications screen

If the patient suffers from a condition in which activity is contraindicated a screen and warning appears. This can be overridden if the GP would still like to continue with prescribing activity.

The screenshot shows a 'Contraindications' window with a list of conditions. The conditions listed are: Unstable Angina, Uncontrolled Cardiac Failure, Uncontrolled Diabetes, Severe Aortic Stenosis, Uncontrolled Hypertension, Acute Infection or Fever, Resting Heart Rate > 100 bpm, and Recent Complicated AMI (< 3 months). There are checkboxes next to each condition, and a 'Next' button at the bottom.

The Physical Activity Prescription screen

The prescription consists of drop down boxes to select the type, duration and frequency with opportunities to write in comments and specific instructions or referral. **The goal is to accumulate 30 minutes or more of moderate intensity physical activity on most days of the week.**

The prescribed activity drop down box includes examples of activities, however the patient's activity of choice can be added using free text. More than one activity can be included in the box.

The screenshot shows a 'Physical Activity Prescription' window. It includes fields for 'Current Activity Level' (Low), 'Prescribed Activity' (Exercise class), 'Advised Length of Activity' (60 minutes), and 'Frequency' (1-2 times per week). There is a 'Referral Details' field and a table for 'Physical activity is especially beneficial because of your:' with columns for 'Year' and 'Condition'. The table shows entries for 1999 (MIGRAINE), 2002 (HIATUS HERNIA), and 2003 (DIABETES). There are also fields for 'Other reasons' and 'Other Benefits' (Improve your general well being).

- Patients should be advised that if any of the following occurs they should stop any activity and return to the GP.
- Dizziness or light-headedness
 - Nausea
 - Difficulty breathing or shortness of breathe
 - Chest tightness or pain
 - Palpitations or tachycardia
 - Claudication

The referral field can be used to refer the patient to an appropriate local physical activity provider.

The *Physical Activity Prescription* window lists the patient's recorded medical conditions. Those conditions which would benefit from physical activity can be marked and will appear on the prescription for the patient's information.

Recall Follow up for Physical Activity Review

A Recall checkbox and calendar is provided – it is important that patients are followed up on their progress at least three months after the *Physical Activity Prescription* has been generated.

The screenshot shows the bottom part of the 'Physical Activity Prescription' window. It includes a 'Comments' field, a 'Date of Next Review' dropdown (set to 11/09/2002), and a checkbox for 'Add Recall For Next Review?'. There are buttons for 'Print Physical Activity Script' and 'Print Physical Activity Patient Education'.

Print Prescription and Patient Information Sheet

This physical activity prescription screen and printed information sheet provide the opportunity to advise the patient about the type, amount and duration of physical activity that is tailored to their capacity and also informs the patient about the personal benefits they can expect from being active. Patients should be advised to: start slowly and build up activity over several weeks; build up to 30 minutes of moderate activity on most days of the week – this can be achieved by accumulated activity in 10 minute bouts.

The whole process should be completed in 2 – 3 minutes