

## 10 Gold Nuggets for people living with inherited ataxia

*Practical insights to help you stay confident, capable, and connected*

### 1. **Your body still learns**

Even with ataxia, your brain and body can adapt. Regular exercise can improve your symptoms – not just delay progression! Repeating everyday tasks and specific exercises helps you stay as functional and safe as possible.

### 2. **Move with purpose**

Exercises tailored to you – especially those that challenge balance, coordination, and strength – are more effective than just “staying active.” A neuro physio can create a plan that works for you.

### 3. **High effort brings high reward**

It might sound surprising, but pushing yourself safely during exercise (like bursts of higher effort or intensity) can improve how you walk, balance, and feel in daily life.

### 4. **Keep it real-world**

Practicing everyday activities like climbing stairs, carrying groceries or turning in small spaces can help your brain and body adjust more effectively than isolated gym movements.

### 5. **Quality matters more than quantity**

It's not about doing more – it's about doing it well. Focus on doing exercises or tasks with as much control, focus, and intention as you can manage.

### 6. **Change the environment, not always the task**

Sometimes small changes – like working on a stable surface, adding handholds, or reducing background noise – make a task more successful and less frustrating.

### 7. **Strength supports stability**

Building strength in your legs, trunk, and arms helps you stay upright and steady. It also makes it easier to get out of chairs, manage stairs, or catch yourself if you wobble.

### 8. **Don't wait for things to get worse**

Starting therapy early, even before big changes happen, makes a difference. It's easier to maintain ability than to try and rebuild it later.

### 9. **Stick with it**

Progress may feel slow, but regular movement (including at home) adds up. Exercise routines that become part of daily life are easier to keep going long-term.

### 10. **You are more than your diagnosis**

Ataxia may affect how you move, but it doesn't define you. Staying connected, doing things you enjoy, and asking for support when needed are just as important.

#### **Disclaimer**

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