

# How to Get Better Mobility After Stroke by “Greasing the Groove”

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If you want to get better mobility after stroke, you need to “grease the groove.”

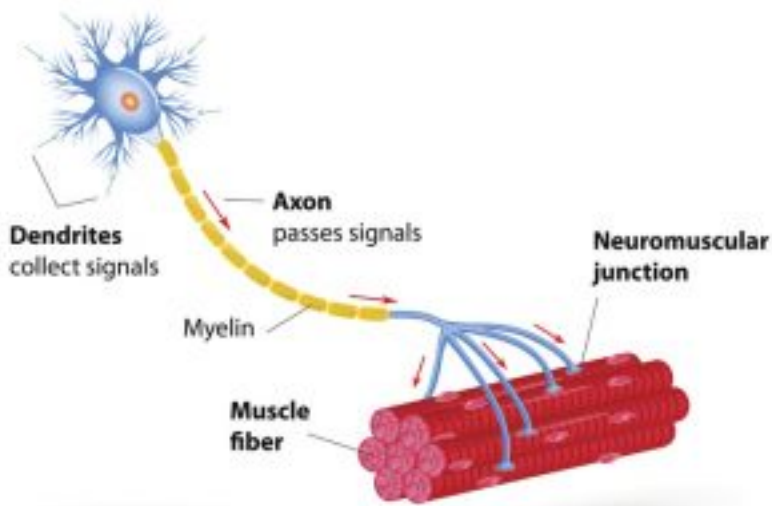
Today, you’ll learn what “greasing the groove” means and how it can help you recover movement after stroke *the fastest way possible*. We’ll also give you the exact steps you need to take to get things underway – plus some awesome success stories that prove it works. There’s a lot of good stuff in here, so let’s hop to it!

## Greasing the Groove

“Greasing the groove” is a saying (coined by fitness guru [Pavel Tsatsouline](#)) that refers to the *neurological groove* that you strengthen each time you practice something. The process is formally known as myelination, one of the stages of neuroplasticity.

During myelination, a fatty white substance forms a coating around the axons of a nerve cell (see the picture below). This allows the nerve impulse to move more quickly.

# MOTOR NEURON



*Myelination = greasing that groove! = better movement after stroke*

The faster your nerve cells work, the faster your muscles can work, and the more natural a movement becomes. In other words, the more you practice, the more you grease the neurological groove!

During stroke recovery, this also means forming brand new pathways, which is why moving can be very difficult at first. You're building those babies from scratch! Luckily, the more you practice moving, the stronger the pathways between your muscles and nervous system grow.

## Mind Over Muscle

And we don't mean to overwhelm you with new sayings, but this is also where the phrase, "rehab starts in the brain, not the body," comes from. (Okay, we might have coined that one, but still.)

During stroke recovery, you're less focused on building muscle and more focused on rebuilding pathways in your brain. Rehab exercise isn't about lifting heavy weights. Rather, it's about performing functional movements over and over and over. This helps *grease the groove* and strengthen the new pathways in your brain and nervous system that control movement. (Then, after you regain movement, you can lift some light weights to regain muscle from the atrophy that likely happened during recovery.)

## How to Get Better Mobility

Alright, now that you know how myelination can help with your recovery, are you ready to start greasing that groove?

Here are 3 steps to activate myelination and get better mobility after stroke:

1. Pick a movement that you want to get better at
2. Practice that movement over and over and over
3. Do that several times a day

It's simple, but it can be very frustrating if you have severe movement impairments. Patience and perseverance are critical. The more you practice the movement, the more you strengthen those neural pathways. And in time, you'll get better and better mobility.

## Don't Self-Sabotage

We'd like to emphasize that you shouldn't go all-in with this method. You want to push yourself, but not to the point of failure. The key is to gradually build up both the volume and challenge of the movements that you're practicing.

For example, if you want to get better at walking, then practicing walking is a great way to do it. However, that might be *too* challenging as not all stroke survivors can practice walking due to movement impairments. In these cases, it's great to pick a few leg and/or core exercises to practice repetitively. Do these exercises with high repetition, and stop just before you're exhausted. That way, you can have another exercise session later in the day (and if you don't think you're cut out for that, just hang on).

## Think You Can't Exercise Several Times a Day?

Well, please think again.

While it's true that you might not be able to exercise several times a day *at first*, you will quickly build up the stamina by greasing that groove. Just take it from our FitMi home therapy users who are trying to improve movement after stroke through high repetition. Some FitMi users said that, when they first started, they could barely do 3-5 repetitions of each exercise. But after a couple weeks, they could do 50 repetitions per exercise! They have improved their stamina and most of them are now exercising multiple times a day. It's how Ron was able to move his arm for the first time ever after just 3 weeks of repetitive practice.

Can you imagine the sweet satisfaction that comes from persevering through the frustration and trusting that repetitive practice really works?!

## Keep Greasing that Groove!

"Greasing the groove" through repetitive practice is the best way to improve movement after stroke. Each time you practice a movement, your nerves get faster at controlling that movement thanks to good ol' myelination and neuroplasticity.

Although it may be a struggle at first, repetitive practice will teach your nerves to fire faster and your muscles to work better. As you continue to grease the groove, your movement will continue to improve.