

May is
SKIN CANCER
AWARENESS MONTH

Coping with Cancer

Ways to manage the effects of a cancer diagnosis

May, 2017

To learn more about support or screening recommendations as well as the dangers of tanning bed use, visit:

[https://
www.cdc.gov/
cancer/dcpc/
resources/
features/
skincancer/](https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/dcpc/resources/features/skincancer/)

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How Exercise Can Benefit You

In the past, when fighting off an illness, feeling sick or just “not yourself,” you may have been told to rest, reduce, or even stop physical activity altogether.

To a certain degree, you do need to rest and take it easy during and after cancer treatment - particularly if movement causes pain, dizziness, rapid heart rate, or shortness of breath.

However, you may want to rethink cutting physical activity out completely.

Newer research has shown that exercise is not only safe and possible during cancer treatment, but can improve how well you function physically and make you feel better.

Even though there is still a lot of unknown factual information on the recovery of cancer or the exact effects on the immune system, regular moderate exercise has been found to have health benefits.

When going about starting an exercise program or routine, each person will have different physical abilities due to their age, severity of diagnosis, and prior exercise experience.



How Important is Your Diet During and After a Cancer

Regular exercise is a great habit to get into, but it is often difficult to muster up the courage to start. When complementing exercise with a healthy diet, you might begin to feel more energized and find that certain exercises are more bearable.

The benefits of good nutrition include: keeping up strength, maintaining weight and nutrients, better tolerance toward treatment-related side effects, lower risk of infection, faster healing and recovery.

Eating a variety of foods will help your body’s ability to fight cancer.

Some nutrients to include are protein, carbohydrates, healthy fat, water, vitamins and minerals.

Source: American Cancer Society



Other ways regular exercise may help you during cancer treatment

- Improve balance, lower risk of falls and broken bones
- Keep muscles from wasting due to inactivity
- Lower the risk of heart disease
- Lessen the risk of osteoporosis (weak bones that are more likely to break)
- Improve blood flow to your legs and lower the risk of blood clots
- Make you less dependent on others for help with normal activities of daily living
- Improve your self-esteem
- Lower the risk of being anxious and depressed
- Improve your ability to keep social contacts
- Lessen symptoms of tiredness (fatigue)
- Help you control your weight

Source: American Cancer Society

How Exercising Can Benefit You, cont.

Cancer patients and survivors may need to exercise less intensely and complete their workout at a slower rate than they are used to doing or seeing other people do.

Exercise doesn't need to be strenuous, intense, and rigorous in order to produce results. "Unconventional" ways to get active may suit you better than joining a gym. Adding more physical activity to your daily routines can include: walking around your neighborhood after dinner, doing yard work, house cleaning, using the stairs or parking farther away from a building than usual, doing crunches, lunges, or squats while watching television, or taking ten minute walking breaks during the day can increase your physical activity.

In addition to the physical benefits, the mental benefits of exercise are many. Exercise can help you relax so that you experience less stress. And, this reduces your chances of developing anxiety, fatigue, and depression. Having an outlet, like exercise, to relieve stress is an important part of getting well and staying well.

You may be thinking, "I have less energy and am more tired than ever before."

Chemotherapy and radiation can leave you feeling very fatigued and can sometimes be severe and limit activity, but complete inactivity can increase fatigue, creating a vicious circle. In fact, recent studies indicate that aerobic exercise, like fast walking, reduces fatigue and lessens nausea.

Other ways to reduce fatigue include: eating a balanced diet, staying hydrated, getting fresh air and doing activities that you enjoy or hobbies that relax you, and getting the rest and sleep you need.



How Exercising Can Benefit You, Cont.

The Precautions and Tips of exercising:

- *Remember to talk to your doctor before starting any type of exercise.*
- Start slowly; short periods of exercise with frequent breaks
- Use a mix of muscle groups for strength training, aerobics, and flexibility
- Always warm up first and stretch afterward; deep breathe and relax
- Don't push yourself, listen to your body



Simple & Easy Exercises For You To Try

These light strength exercises will get your heart racing and your blood pumping a little bit. For upper body strength, add dumbbells.



Step-Ups

Step up and down on a heightened surface like the first step of a staircase to strengthen legs and lower body.



Chair Squat

Sit down on a chair and slowly stand to strengthen legs and lower body.



Leg Raises

Lay down on your back and raise each of your legs up in the air and down flat to strengthen core and legs.



Lunges

Standing, place one foot in front of the other and bend the legs. Walk across a room while alternating legs.

**UAB
COMPREHENSIVE
CANCER CENTER**

Wallace Tumor
Institute

Phone: 205.934-5772

E-mail:
tgw318@uab.edu

We're on the Web!



*We would like your
suggestions*

*Please let us know the
topics you would like us to
include in our newsletter
and programs you would
like for us to offer.*

Email your suggestions
to:

tgw318@uab.edu

UAB COMPREHENSIVE
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Knowledge that will change your world

Programs and Events to Support You!

Forge Breast Cancer Survivor Center Presents:

“The Benefits of Gardening Throughout Life’s Journey”
Enjoy light refreshments and create a potted plant to take home!

Guest Speaker: Wendy Demark-Wahnefried, PhD, RD
When: Saturday, May 6, 9:30—11:30 am
Where: Birmingham Botanical Gardens
2612 Lane Park Road
Birmingham, AL
Register: www.forgeon.org/news-events or (205) 838-6159

Robert E. Reed GI Oncology Research Foundation Presents:

“The 2nd Annual Living with Cancer Symposium: strategies for improving the health
and well-being of cancer survivors.

Guest Speakers: Marty Heslin, MD; Elizabeth Kvale, MD; Sushanth Reddy, MD,
Laura Rogers, MD, Carolina Salvador, MD
When: Monday, May 15, 1:00—4:00 pm
Where: UAB National Alumni Society House
1301 10th Avenue South
Birmingham, AL
Register: <http://www.reedgifoundation.com/living-with-cancer-symposium.php>

Forge Breast Cancer Survivors Center Presents:

“Metavivors of Alabama: a stage IV/metastatic breast cancer support network”

Guest Speakers: Andres Forero, MD & Gabrielle Rocque, MD
When: Saturday, May 20, 10:00-11:30 am
Where: Oasis Counseling
1900 14th Avenue South
Birmingham, AL
Register: amy.bailey.ackley@gmail.com or (205) 908-7729

Are You a Cancer survivor?

Do You Use the Internet Regularly

If you answered “yes”, we need your help!

We are designing a website to help survivors manage their weight, exercise more and eat better.

Now, we are ready to pilot test it—and, we’re looking for survivors to give us feedback. So, if you answered “yes” to those 2 questions, are at least 18 years old, please call: (205) 484-4062 or visit:

[https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/survivorshine)

survivorshine

Move Forward

UAB Cancer Exercise Services
Whether you are undergoing treatment or done—and you are ready to start an exercise program—let our UAB cancer certified professional trainers help you.

Cancer Exercise Trainer Services:

one-on-one training sessions

Or

Strengthening Recovery: 6 week
group education class series.

Information: (205) 975-1247