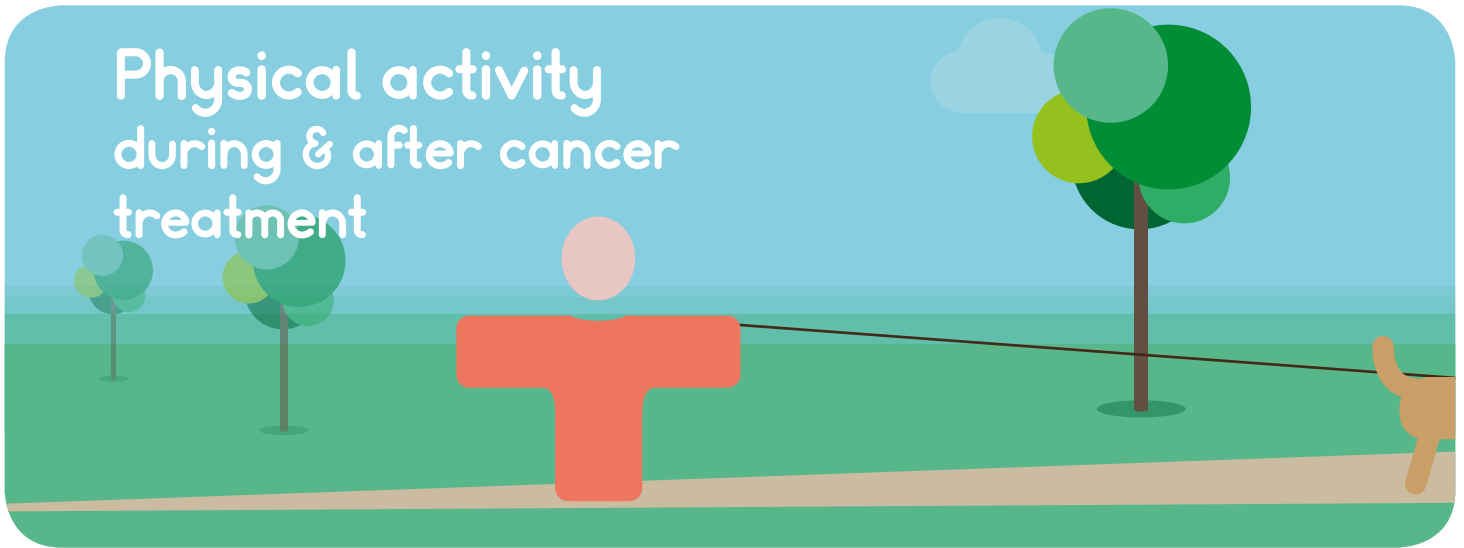




Physical activity during & after cancer treatment



This resource talks about how physical activity may affect your health during and after cancer treatment. It should be used along with additional information given to you from your family doctor.

Regular physical activity can help you manage during and after treatment for cancer. Studies show that people who have a history of cancer who are more physically active have:



Higher rates of treatment completion and shorter hospital stays

Lower rates and severity of symptoms and side effects of chemotherapy

Lower stress and anxiety levels

Better body image, mood, and self-esteem

Better long-term survival rates (breast and colon cancer)

Your physical activity can be **enjoyable**, **effective**, and **safe**.



Enjoyable



Trying different activities lets you find what works best for you; it's also okay to change what you are doing from time to time, or simply try and add a walk into your daily routine. If you're not sure how to begin, consider attending an exercise class or drop-in activity in your community, such as a walking group. Being active with others can be a great way to make physical activity more enjoyable, and remember to reward yourself often!

Effective



Higher levels of activity, approaching the Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines of 150 minutes of moderate physical activity per week, help reduce the risk of cancer coming back. Both during and after treatment, it is important to stay active!

Safe



The kind of physical activity you can do safely may be affected by your health conditions, your fitness level, and by your current treatments. Getting started usually means moving 'little but often' with some light walking or similar types of activity. Gradually increase to a level that makes you feel like you are breathing heavier than normal, so that you can still hold a conversation, but not sing. If you feel especially tired, you can try less intense physical activity for a shorter time, or take a day off and try again the next day.

Avoid physical activity and consult your doctor if you experience any of the following symptoms:

- Unusual fatigue or weakness
- Chest pain or an irregular pulse
- Difficulty breathing
- Feeling sick during activity
- Acute pain or injury
- Unexplained dizzy spells

Helpful resources



Contact Wellspring: A network of community-based support centres offering programs and services that meet the emotional, social, practical, and restorative needs of people living with cancer and those who care for them, to find out about different individual and group exercise programs that may be enjoyable for you.
<https://wellspring.ca>

The Canadian Cancer Society gives great tips for getting active while you are undergoing treatment.

<http://www.cancer.ca/en/cancer-information/cancer-journey/living-with-cancer/physical-activity-during-cancer-treatment/?region=on>

The Canadian Cancer society also has a Cancer Information Service, with a team who can help you find local resources, including activity programs. Call 1.888.939.3333.

Doctors in the UK have put together a website with informative videos and online pamphlets, including specific advice about physical activity before and after treatment for seven different types of cancer.

<http://www.benefitfromactivity.org.uk/why-am-i-doing-this/conditions/cancer/?submit=Go>

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