

Recovery, Restoration, and Renewal: The Power of Movement



**The Benefits of Movement and
Exercise During and After Cancer**

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Today's Plan



Discuss: The positive effects of exercise and movement during and after cancer treatments.



Participate: A group guided movement experience



Q&A: Answer questions and review key resources.

Positive Benefits of Exercise (General)

Physical Benefits

- ✓ Increased energy
- ✓ Improved sleep

Mental & Pain Benefits

- ✓ Improved mood
- ✓ Reduced chronic pain

Why Move? The Cancer-Specific Evidence



Improves Quality of Life

Correlates with reduction in cancer-related fatigue (CRF), anxiety, and depression.



Manages Side Effects

Helps maintain muscle mass, bone density, and cardiovascular health during treatment



May Improve Outcomes

Strong evidence suggests exercise may reduce recurrence risk and improve survival.

Key Evidence & Guidelines

Key Evidence: Walking & Survival

3–
Hours/Week
Walking
5

Physical Activity and Survival after Breast Cancer Diagnosis: 2005 Study

This landmark study showed that walking 2–3 mph (faster was not necessarily better) for a total of 3–5 hours per week correlated with reduced recurrence and improved survival after breast cancer diagnosis and treatment

(Holmes MD, et al. JAMA. 2005)

Key Evidence: Postoperative Rehab

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"Breast cancer patients demonstrated significant improvement in shoulder and upper body function when engaging in regular physical activity including yoga, Pilates, strength training, and cardio."

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— 2025 Meta-Analysis (Xue T, et al. Medicine. 2025)

Guideline: Aerobic Exercise (HHS)

15

Mins/Week
(Moderate)

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HHS Physical Activity Guidelines

- **Frequency:** 3–5 days per week.
- **Intensity:** Moderate (e.g., brisk walking, "can talk but not sing").
- **Type:** Walking, cycling, swimming, or any rhythmic activity.

Guideline: Strength & Flexibility (HHS)

Strength Training

Frequency: 2–3 days per week.

Intensity: 8–15 repetitions, 1–3 sets.

Type: Major muscle groups (legs, back, chest). Use bands, weights (progressive loading), or body weight.





Flexibility

Frequency: 2–3+ days per week.

Intensity: Stretch to the point of mild tension.

Type: Gentle stretching of major muscle groups.
Hold for 15–30 seconds.

Addressing Common Barriers

-  **Fatigue:** "Start low, go slow." Even 5–10 minutes of walking can help combat cancer-related fatigue.
-  **Fear of Injury/Pain:** Work with a physical therapist to create a *safe* individualized plan.
-  **Motivation/Mood:** Schedule it like any other appointment. Exercise with a partner or group.
-  **Medical Concerns:** Neuropathy, lymphedema, nausea. We must adapt the exercise to the individual. ***keep in mind that recent studies show that exercise correlates with reduction in these symptoms***

Safety First: Precautions

When to Exercise

Get medical clearance before starting.

Warm-up and cool-down are essential.

Hydrate well.

Listen to your body – don't push through sharp pain.

When to Stop/Consult

Stop if you feel chest pain, dizziness, or unusual shortness of breath.

Avoid exercise if you have a fever or acute infection.

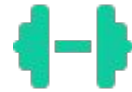
Be aware of changes: new, unexplained pain or unusual swelling.

The Healthcare Team's Role



Physicians

Screen for contraindications and provide medical clearance. Refer to PT.



Physical Therapists

Design individualized, safe programs. Help clients/patients manage side effects like lymphedema, pain, and neuropathy.



Patient & Survivor

Advocate for your needs. Communicate barriers to participation. **Be an active participant in your recovery.**

Let's Move Together

A guided movement experience.



Questions & Sources

Questions?

Key Sources:

Holmes MD, Chen WY, Feskanich D, et al. (2005). Physical Activity and Survival After Breast Cancer Diagnosis. *JAMA*, 293(20):2479–2486.

Xue T, Zhang L, Zhang D. (2025). Exercise-based interventions for postoperative rehabilitation in breast cancer patients: A systematic review and meta-analysis... *Medicine (Baltimore)*, 104(34):e43705.

Zagalaz-Anula N, Mora-Rubio MJ, et al. (2022). Recreational physical activity reduces breast cancer recurrence in female survivors... *Eur J Oncol Nurs*, 59:102162.

HHS. (2018). *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2nd edition.*