



Exercise for People with Cancer

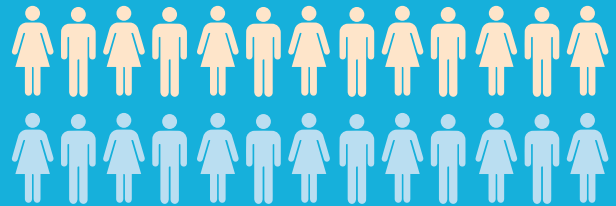
» It is vital that members of the healthcare team initiate a conversation about exercise with cancer patients. This is the first essential step that should be taken by healthcare providers so further support can be given.



The Burden

50%

of Canadian cancer survivors are completely inactive (Neil et al., 2014)



Benefits of Exercise for People with Cancer

A growing body of evidence describes numerous benefits for people with cancer that engage in exercise

- Quality of life (QoL)
- Physical function
- Depression & anxiety
- Body composition
- Treatment completion
- Fatigue
- Coping
- Functional mobility and return to work
- Survival

(Sabiston, Vallance & Brunet, 2014)

The Gap

Patients are more likely to be active if a healthcare provider discusses exercise with them, but most do not start the conversation.

- Patients who receive exercise advice from a healthcare provider are more than 50% more likely to be active (Weidinger et al., 2008)

"My hope is that an Exercise Guideline will enable health-care providers to better assist physiological and psychosocial changes that many people experience as a result of cancer treatments. I am confident that this guideline and the acknowledgement that changes do occur will have a very big impact on the patient's quality of life and their ability to excel in every aspect of daily life."

– Debora, PFA



Recommendations

The guideline outlines the following recommendations:

1. People living with cancer can safely engage in moderate amounts of exercise (see Recommendation 3) while on active treatment or post completion of treatment.
2. Moderate amounts of exercise (see Recommendation 3) are recommended to improve the QoL, as well as the muscular and aerobic fitness of people living with cancer.
3. Clinicians should advise their patients to engage in exercise consistent with the recommendations outlined by the Canadian Society of Exercise Physiology and the American College of Sports Medicine. The recommended duration, frequency, and/or intensity are the following:
 - 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise spread over three to five days and resistance training at least two days per week;
 - Resistance sessions should involve major muscle groups two to three days per week (eight to 10 muscle groups, eight to 10 repetitions, two sets); and
 - Each session should include a warm up and cool down.
4. A pre-exercise assessment for all people living with cancer before starting an exercise intervention is recommended to evaluate for any effects of disease, treatments and/or comorbidities.
5. It is recommended, where possible, that people living with cancer exercise in a group or supervised setting as it may provide a superior benefit/outcome in QoL and muscular and aerobic fitness.
6. It is recommended, where possible, that people living with cancer perform exercise at a moderate intensity (three to six times the baseline resting state) on an ongoing basis as a part of their lifestyle so that improvements in QoL and muscular and aerobic fitness can be maintained for the long term.

Need this information in an accessible format?

1-855-460-2647, TTY (416) 217-1815
publicaffairs@cancercare.on.ca.

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