

Exercising for Health

Why exercise?

Exercise has been proven to provide the following benefits to cancer patients and survivors:

(Check the ones that are important to you)

- Improve endurance and energy
- Improve self-esteem and mood
- Improve memory and prevent dementia
- Decrease stress
- Help maintain a healthy weight
- Decrease fall risk
- Help maintain bone density
- Decrease diabetes risk
- Decrease risk of heart disease and strokes

Getting Started with Exercise

Start Low, Go Slow – talk to your healthcare provider, and start with just 5 minutes of exercise if you have not been active. You can increase by a few minutes a day until you get to the goal of 150 minutes per week. If you have joint problems, think about starting with pool exercise.

Need Motivation?

- With regular exercise energy level improves and chronic pain improves (stick out those first few weeks and then notice how you feel the rest of the day)
- Get some social support from your family and friends.
- Get involved in a fundraiser that involves physical activity.
- Altruism – find someone else who needs to get out for walks and make them your project.

Keep it fun:

- Which is better for you: Solitary vs. with a “Buddy” vs. in a Group?
- Are you competitive? Get a pedometer and compete with your friends to increase steps.
- Do you get bored exercising?

This handout is for informational purposes only. Talk with your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.

- Try setting up your equipment in front of your television (and make a deal with yourself that you only get to watch your favorite show while exercising.)
- Listen to music, books on tape, or podcasts while exercising.
- Exercise with a friend and have a stimulating conversation (make “walking dates” with your friends or sweetie)
- Try a “moving meditation”, clearing your mind, focusing on the rhythm of the exercise, and letting your daily stresses slip away.

Your exercise commitment:

I will schedule my exercise (circle one):

in the a.m.

mid-day

evenings

I will:

(describe activity)

For: _____ minutes per day, and on _____ days per week.