

Tips for a Successful Exercise Program

Regular exercise several times a week is good for your mind and body. Exercise can help fight fatigue, boost your energy level, relieve stress and tension, make your muscles stronger and help you sleep better.

Walking, bicycling, swimming, dancing and strength training are all examples of exercise. Mind and body exercises such as qigong, tai chi, and yoga may also be helpful.

Before You Start an Exercise Program

Check with your doctor before starting an exercise program. It is important to know if it is safe for you to exercise. Ask your doctor about any special precautions you should follow.

Moderate physical activity includes walking, dancing or water aerobics.

Vigorous physical activity includes jogging, running, fast swimming, tennis or step aerobics.

Tips for Success When Exercising

- It is helpful to exercise with someone to help you stay on your exercise program.
- If you are starting a new exercise program, start slow and increase your activity over a period of time.
- Keep track of the exercises you do each day. This will help show your progress.
- Set a goal based on your ability. You may find that you need to do an exercise for a few minutes each day and work up to 30 minutes of moderate physical activity 5 days per week or 20 minutes of vigorous physical activity 3 days per week.

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

- Pick exercises that match your fitness level and ones that you enjoy.
- If you have joint or bone problems, do activities that put less stress on your joints and bones. Doing exercises in a pool may be helpful.
- As you increase your exercise level, add muscle strength training to your exercise program. These may include resistance exercises with weights, resistance bands or yoga.
- If you become very tired when exercising you may need to reduce your activity time.
- Change your exercise routine to keep it interesting and fun.
- To measure the effort you put into exercise, you can use the Rate of Perceived Exertion (RPE) scale. See the patient education handout, [Exercise Log – Oncology Rehabilitation](#), for more information.