

Ready to start planning your care? Call us at [800-525-2225](tel:800-525-2225) to make an appointment.

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Memorial Sloan Kettering
Cancer Center

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Regular physical activity is important for good health. Regardless of your age, sex, or physical ability, engaging in physical activity can provide health benefits for cancer survivors.

Staying Active Can

- Improve heart health.
- Increase or protect bone density.
- Improve cognitive function.
- Reduce fatigue and increase energy.
- Reduce depression and anxiety.
- Prevent and relieve constipation.
- Improve joint pain.
- Reduce the risk for other types of cancer and many chronic health conditions and diseases.
- Improve overall wellness.

Getting Started

First, it is important to get medical clearance from your doctor or nurse. Once you have received clearance, begin designing a plan incorporating activities that you enjoy, are accessible to you, and will not cause an injury or aggravate an old one.

Next, set small goals. Exercise can be broken up into two or three sessions. For instance, if you don't have an entire hour to spend, try walking for 30 minutes twice a day.

Finally, make gradual increases in how long and how often you exercise.

Be Creative

Below are a few examples of how physical activity can be incorporated into your daily routine:

- Take the stairs instead of the elevator or escalator.

- Get off the subway or bus one or two stops early and walk the rest of the way.
- Go for a walk after dinner.
- Do some gentle stretches when you first get up in the morning.
- Bike, walk, or rollerblade to the store instead of driving.
- Walk the dog several times a day instead of hiring a walker.
- Get up from your desk throughout the day and take a short walk around the office.
- Instead of sending an email or calling a co-worker, walk to his or her office.
- Plan active social activities with friends and family. Instead of watching a movie with your children, go to the park.
- When golfing, walk instead of using a cart.
- Walk or play Frisbee at the beach or in the park instead of lying down or sitting.
- After going out for dinner, go out dancing.

Additional Resources

[Exercise Counts: Calories Burned During Various Activities](#)

A tool developed by the American Cancer Society allows you to estimate the number of calories burned doing various activities.

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