

# Importance of Exercise After Diagnosis of Breast Cancer

## Exercise can help

These are general exercise guidelines. Follow any specific instructions or restrictions that your healthcare team gave you.

### During Treatment

 Studies suggest that regular exercise **after diagnosis** may be associated with:



**Reduced risk of cardiovascular events, such as heart disease and heart failure, by 20% to 40%**

People with breast cancer may be at higher risk of cardiac events because of cancer treatments.



**Reduced risk of cancer recurrence or death from breast cancer by 20% to 50%**

 Studies have shown that regular exercise **during cancer treatment** is associated with:



**Fewer psychosocial side effects of treatment**

Improvement in overall quality of life due to higher energy levels and less fatigue.



**Improvement in physical side effects of treatment**

Maintenance or improvements in physical fitness, body composition (% of body fat and muscle) and muscle strength.

 Exercise may help people **complete treatment as planned** with fewer disruptions and delays.



### After Treatment

 Studies suggest that regular exercise **after treatment** is associated with:

**Improvements in:**

- Fatigue and energy levels
- Body composition
- Physical fitness



- Having a sense of control and empowerment

### Get FITT

**F**  
FREQUENCY

**How often should I exercise?**  
Work towards exercising 5 days per week.

**I**  
INTENSITY

**How hard should I exercise?**  
Exercise at a moderate or vigorous intensity. You can tell the intensity by how hard it is to talk. During moderate intensity exercise you should be able to comfortably hold a conversation without feeling out of breath. During vigorous exercise you may find it difficult to comfortably hold a conversation.

**T**  
TYPE

**What type of exercise should I do?**  
Do aerobic exercises, such as walking, dancing, jogging, swimming, and cycling. All types of aerobic exercise are helpful.

**T**  
TIME

**How long should I exercise?**  
Exercise 20 to 60 minutes per session. Try alternating your exercise sessions between moderate intensity for a longer session and vigorous intensity for shorter sessions.

**Already Exercise**

5 or more times per week

Moderate to vigorous

Walking, cycling, swimming, skiing

20 to 60 minutes per session

**New to Exercise**

3 times per week

Moderate

Brisk walking

20 minutes per session (2 to 3 weeks)

Talk with your doctor before starting an exercise program.

For more information visit:  
[www.mskcc.org/research/lab/lee-jones](http://www.mskcc.org/research/lab/lee-jones)  
[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)



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