

Exercise and Activity During Your Oncology Treatment

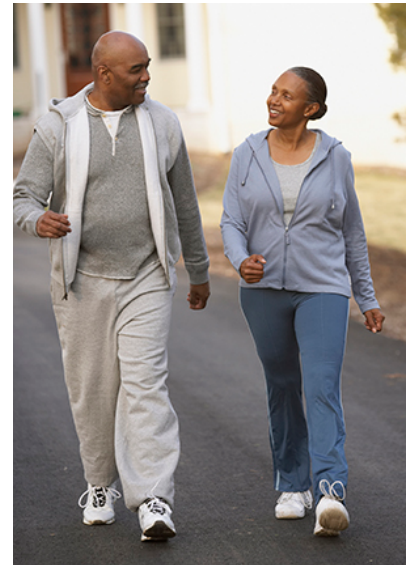
How it can help and what to do

This handout gives activity goals and precautions to follow during and after your oncology treatment.

Why do I need to exercise?

Your healthcare providers advise you to exercise regularly, both before and after your cancer treatment. Regular exercise will help you:

- **Stay strong.** Not getting out of bed can decrease your muscle strength by 1% to 3% every day!
- **Lessen fatigue (tiredness).** Severe fatigue affects up to 75% of people with cancer. A regular walking program helps overcome fatigue related to cancer and cancer treatment
- **Stay mobile.** Before you go home from the hospital, your medical team wants to make sure that you can move around your house and also get around the clinic at your follow-up visits



Walking will help you stay strong and give you energy.

Do I need to take any special care?

Your blood counts may decrease after your treatment. There are some exercises you should not do if you have decreased platelets and red blood cells.

Talk with your nurse or physical or occupational therapist about your exercise program. Find out what types of exercise you can do safely.

Daily Activity Goals

While you are in the hospital, your goals are to:

- Spend most of the day out of bed.
- Avoid taking too many naps during the day. We want to keep your waking and sleeping cycle as close to normal as we can.
- Start a walking program. Aim to walk at least 2 to 3 times a day.
 - Walking should be a moderate level of effort (3 to 5 on a scale of 0 to 10). It is OK to rest as needed while you are walking.
 - Ask your nurse how many laps around the unit equal 1 mile. Keep track of how many laps you walk. When you have walked 1 mile, tell the front desk staff. They will give you feet to place on your door! (Remember that you do not need to walk all the laps at once.)
- Do a strengthening routine once a day. Some basic exercises are below. Your physical therapist (PT) or occupational therapist (OT) may also give you specific exercises to work after they assess you.

Exercises

Sit to Stand

- Sit on a firm surface, such as a chair or your bed.
- Keep your head facing forward.
- Stand up slowly.
- Sit and repeat 10 times.



Bridge

- Lie flat on your back in bed or on a firm surface.
- Bend your knees as shown.
- Lift your buttocks off the floor to form a bridge with your body.
- Hold for 5 seconds.
- Return to start.
- Repeat 10 times.



Special Instructions: Remember to keep a neutral spine! This means your back is not arched.

Shoulder Retraction

- Sit tall on a firm surface, such as a hard chair.
- Pinch your shoulder blades together as shown.
- Hold for 5 seconds.
- Relax.
- Repeat 10 times.



Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

Physical Therapy: 206.598.4830