

Making Exercise Happen in Cancer Care

Exercise helps your body build strength and endurance. Before, during, and after your cancer treatment, exercise can help you in these ways:

- Quicker recovery
- Less pain
- Better rest and sleep

Find your own best reason to exercise—for example, being able to play with your kids or staying independent. Your ultimate goal is be active for at least 150 minutes per week. Start with what you can do, and work your way up.

Choose activities you like to do. That is the key to meeting your exercise goals.

Here are some tips to help you make exercise happen.

“I don’t have time.”

You can add exercise to things you need to do anyway.

- Walk or ride your bike to work or shopping
- Exercise while you watch TV
- Park farther from your destinations and walk in
- Walk the dog or play with children

Keep track of everything you do each day for a week. Try to find at least three days a week when you could do activities that add up to 30 minutes. Schedule exercise times on your calendar.

“I’m too tired.”

Remind yourself that exercising will actually give you more energy. It’s true. Try it!

Schedule exercise for times in the day or week when you have the most energy.

“I can’t get motivated.”

Invite friends and family to exercise with you.

Plan social activities that involve exercise such as dancing and outdoor games.

Join a group or class with an activity you like such as hiking or walking tours.

“I’m afraid I’ll get hurt.”

Choose activities with a lower risk of getting hurt:

- Walking instead of running or riding a bike
- Snowshoeing instead of skiing
- Water aerobics instead of step aerobics

Warm up before exercise and cool down afterward.

“I don’t know how.”

Choose activities that need no new skills such as walking, climbing stairs, or jogging.

Take a class to learn a new activity.

“I can’t afford equipment and classes.”

Many types of exercise such as walking and jogging need little special equipment.

Talk with your cancer care team about strength exercises you can do without gym machines.

You may find low-cost gyms and classes through schools, parks and recreation programs, or your workplace.

“I can’t exercise when I travel.”

Walk the halls and climb stairs in hotels.

Stay in places with a swimming pool or exercise room.

Walk through the local shopping area.

Bring a jump rope or your favorite aerobic dance music and exercise in your room.

Before you start, talk with your cancer care team about an exercise plan that is right for you.

For information about free and low-cost exercise classes and programs for Huntsman Cancer Institute patients, call the Linda B. and Robert B. Wiggins Wellness and Integrative Health Center at 801-587-4585 or visit www.huntsmancancer.org/wellnesscenter