



**Mount
Sinai**

Exercise and Being Physically Active

Exercise or physical activity can be an important part of improving your physical and emotional health during and after treatment. It is important to set realistic goals based on your treatment schedule, time available, how you feel on any given day and other factors. By making this a priority and setting reasonable goals, you can feel stronger, sleep better and improve your mood. Remember that you don't need to run a marathon. Some days even sitting in a chair instead of lying in bed will be as much activity as you can do.

Here are four steps you can take to make a personalized plan for making sure you are physically active:

Step 1: Get started with something you like

- Talk to your doctor about any possible restrictions on your physical activity
- Ask for support from others, or get friends, family, and co-workers to exercise with you
- Start slowly and pace yourself

Stretching: In order to keep your body strong and flexible, especially when it is run down it's a good idea to stretch the muscles. Arm, leg and whole body stretches can be a good start for those who don't feel ready to move into more vigorous type of workouts.

Aerobic exercise: This type of exercise can help burn calories while also contributing to an overall healthy lifestyle. Examples include: long walks, jogs, swimming and even aerobic videos in the comfort of your own home.

Weight training: During treatment it's often likely that many people lose muscle and tend to gain weight. In this case, weight training can be helpful in order to get the muscles to begin working again. Make sure to start at a lower weight level and only move up in weights once you feel ready.

Step 2: Keep going

- The goal is to find a way to do some form of activity, rather than nothing at all
- Adjust your exercise to match your energy level; some days you will be able to do more than others
- Determine the amount of time and effort you can put into physical activity each day

Step 3: Notice how you feel

- While you exercise, take a moment to notice if you are working too hard
- If you can talk in full sentences without getting short of breath, you are working at a safe level

Step 4: ACE Your Workout:

After finishing your workout, use this test to decide whether you aced your workout. When you ACE your workout, you will feel:

- Alert – mentally
- Calm – emotionally
- Energized – physically

Remember that old proverb that says "the journey of a thousand steps begins with the first step?" The goal should be to keep up as much activity as possible throughout your cancer experience. Be safe, set reasonable goals and try to have fun.

This information is provided as an educational service.

It is not meant to take the place of medical care or the advice of your doctor.