

Cancer information
and support.
From Macmillan.
At Boots.

BEING ACTIVE DURING AND AFTER CANCER TREATMENT

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CANCER SUPPORT





If you've been affected by cancer, being physically active can improve your quality of life. Whether it's doing the gardening or walking to the shops, any movement counts. So if you haven't been very active for a while or are new to it, you don't have to leap straight in at the deep end to feel the benefits.

Increasing your physical activity can help you recover from cancer and its treatment, and will also benefit your long-term health. It's also a great way to spend time with family and friends or meet new people, and do something positive for yourself.

Physical activity has lots of benefits. It can:

- improve your mood
- help you cope with stress
- help you feel less tired
- make your bones and heart healthier and your muscles stronger
- help you keep to a healthy weight

Being active can also reduce your chance of getting other health problems, like diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, lung disease and stroke.

Keeping to a healthy weight and taking regular physical activity may reduce your risk of getting another new (primary) cancer. In some cancers, keeping to a healthy weight may also reduce the risk of the cancer coming back.

It's important to get advice from your cancer specialist before you start any kind of physical activity.

Simple ways to be more active

Depending on your situation and level of fitness, there are some simple ways you can build up your physical activity.

It's important to do something you enjoy and that fits in with your life – it could be joining a walking group, cycling to the shops or gentle yoga.

There are lots of great activity ideas in *Move more: your complete guide to becoming active*. Order it online at macmillan.org.uk/movemore or call us on 0808 808 00 00.

How much physical activity should I do?

How much and what type of activities you choose to do will depend on your situation. Your age, how active you are normally, your cancer type and treatment as well as any other long-term condition you may have can all affect this. *Move more*, our physical activity guide, has lots more helpful information.

If you're not used to exercise and have decided to make a positive lifestyle change, start at a pace that works for you. Gradually build up the amount you do – whether that's walking a little more often or being more active around the house. As you become fitter, you'll find you can do more.

A healthy guide for adults is to do at least 30 minutes of moderate activity five times a week.

Getting started

Get advice before you start. Ask your cancer specialist about the type and amount of exercise that's safe for you to do. Your nurse, GP, physiotherapist, occupational therapist and exercise specialist can also help.

Here are some tips to help you get started:

- Do something you enjoy that fits in with your everyday life.
- Set goals you can achieve at your own pace.
- Gradually build up how much you do.
- Listen to your body and don't overdo it.
- Keep a record of how active you've been so you can see your progress.
- Ask your family and friends to support you by getting involved. It's good for them, easier for you and more fun.

Physical activity in your area

You can get advice from your GP and healthcare team or contact your local council, library, community or leisure centre to find out what's available. There are lots of different activities available to you – from running and cycling, to yoga and Tai Chi.

We can also help you get active with our resources and walking events:

- ***Move more*** is our complete guide to becoming active. It includes our booklet ***Physical activity and cancer treatment***, a guide to getting started, advice on goal setting, an activity planner, top tips and an activity search tool. To order your copy, visit macmillan.org.uk/movemore

- Our *Move more* website also has videos of cancer survivors talking about how they've become more active, and information from health professionals.
- If you enjoy walking, you may want to get involved with our **Miles for Macmillan** walks. In partnership with Boots UK, we're inviting people to get active and enjoy the great outdoors while raising money for people affected by cancer. You can also organise your own Miles walk – even if it's just a short stroll. Find out more from your local Boots store, or online at macmillan.org.uk/walking

Next steps

Once you've started you'll probably find that being active becomes an enjoyable part of the way you live. Most people notice the benefits quickly.

Making these changes and knowing the benefits to your health can keep you going, even on days when it's hard to feel motivated. If you're struggling, don't be hard on yourself. Just remind yourself of why you're doing it and get started again.

We have more information about cancer types, tests, treatments and living with and after cancer. We also have details of other helpful organisations and support groups in your area.



Questions about living with cancer?

Call the Macmillan Support Line

free on 0808 808 00 00

(Monday–Friday 9am–8pm).

Alternatively, visit macmillan.org.uk

Hard of hearing? Use textphone

0808 808 0121, or Text Relay.

Non-English speaker? Interpreters available.

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