

Exercise and Prostate Cancer

Exercise offers far-reaching benefits for cancer survivors. It can help reduce fatigue, increase energy, improve quality of life, and even help with certain side effects of treatment. Research shows that exercise can be safe both during and after cancer treatment. We encourage all patients to live an active lifestyle.

How much exercise should I get?

Depending on your age, previous exercise experience, energy levels, side effects from treatment, and other health concerns, exercise recommendations may vary. **Please talk with your physician before beginning an exercise program.** You may need a personalized exercise plan if you have: extreme fatigue, osteoporosis, or peripheral neuropathies. Some general recommendations from the American Cancer Society and American College of Sports Medicine:

- **Every week, get 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity or 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity**
- **Exercise for at least 10 minutes per session, preferably spread throughout the week**
- **Aim for at least two weekly sessions of strength training**

Start your exercise routine under the supervision of a physical therapist, exercise physiologist, or certified personal trainer. To find a **Certified Cancer Exercise Trainer** in your area, visit <http://certification.acsm.org>, click on "Find a Pro," and select "ACSM/ACS Certified Cancer Exercise Trainer" in the dropdown menu on the search page.

Types of exercise

Aerobic Exercise

- Walking
- Running
- Biking
- Swimming

Benefits

- Increased energy
- Improved mood
- Improved blood sugar control
- Improved cholesterol
- Weight management/loss
- Decreased blood pressure
- Decreased risk of osteoporosis
- Reduces the risk of developing heart disease

Strength Training

- Weightlifting
- Bodyweight exercises

Benefits

- Increased lean body mass
- Increased bone health

Flexibility Training

- Stretching
- Yoga/Pilates

Benefits

- More relaxed
- Improved mood

Adult Survivorship Program

a member of the LIVESTRONG Survivorship Center of Excellence Network

Cardiovascular disease risk

Recent studies suggest that prostate cancer survivors who receive androgen deprivation therapy are at increased risk for **cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and bone fractures**. These increased risks may be due to the negative effects androgen deprivation therapy can potentially have on your body, including:

- Increased body fat
- Increased fasting insulin levels
- Increased insulin resistance
- Poor cholesterol
- Effects on blood vessels

Research shows importance of a healthy lifestyle

Several large studies have examined the **rates of cardiovascular disease and diabetes** among prostate cancer patients who have received **androgen deprivation therapy**. The results of these studies show why it's important to maintain a healthy lifestyle, which can lower your overall risk of heart disease and diabetes.

One study analyzed 73,196 men age 66 or older. In this study, the rates of newly diagnosed cardiovascular disease and diabetes were significantly increased among the patients receiving androgen deprivation therapy.

- Heart suddenly stopping and dying: 4.5% greater risk
- Heart attack: 5.4% greater risk
- Diabetes: 10.9% greater risk
- Hardening of the arteries: 25.3% greater risk

Another study examined 37,443 men of all ages. The study revealed an increased risk of both cardiovascular disease and diabetes for patients receiving androgen deprivation therapy.

- Heart suddenly stopping and dying: 3.6% greater risk
- Heart attack: 3.6% greater risk
- Stroke/TIA: 3.2% greater risk
- Diabetes: 22.2% greater risk
- Hardening of the arteries: 20.7% greater risk

Healthy choices matter

Fortunately, research shows that men can gain key health benefits from **healthy lifestyle changes**, such as **getting more physical activity, improving their diet (and/or losing weight)**, and **quitting smoking**. Regular aerobic exercise, for example, offers many cardiovascular benefits, such as weight loss, improved lipid profiles, reductions in blood pressure, and prevention and treatment of type 2 diabetes.

Still have questions?

For more information or to make an appointment with Dana-Farber exercise physiologist Nancy Campbell, call **617-632-4LAD (Life After Diagnosis)** or email **dfci_adultsurvivors@dfci.harvard.edu**. Learn more online at **www.dana-farber.org/exercise**.

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