

Exercise or physical activity can be an important part of improving your physical and emotional health while supporting your loved one with cancer. Most people can do some exercise even if they have physical limitations, limited time, or limited resources. It is important to set realistic goals based on your loved one's treatment schedule; your work, home, or school demands; and how your loved one feels on any given day. By making this a priority and setting reasonable goals, you can potentially feel stronger, sleep better and improve your mood—all of which can benefit your loved one as well.



[www.CancerSupportCommunity.org](http://www.CancerSupportCommunity.org)  
1-888-793-9355



Remember that you do not need to run a marathon. Cleaning the house, walking the dog, or stretching can also be forms of exercise. Sometimes caregivers find that this is something they can do together with their loved one—walks are a great time to connect and unwind for both of you. Recent information shows that physical activity may even lower the chance of their cancer coming back and improve both of your quality of life. Before you resume or start a new exercise program, you should check with your health care team.

Here are 4 steps you can take to personalize a plan for being physically active:

■ **Step 1: Start with something you like**

- Talk to the doctor about any possible restrictions on your physical activity
- Set short-term and long-term goals
- Ask for support from others: get friends, family, and co-workers to exercise together or help watch your loved one while you exercise
- Reward yourself when you reach your goals
- Start slowly and set a reasonable pace

■ **Step 2: Keep going**

- The goal is to find a way to do some form of activity, rather than nothing at all
- Learn to 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 miles begins with the first step*”? The goal should be to keep up as much activity as possible throughout the cancer experience. Be safe, set reasonable goals, and try to have fun.

If you would like to get more physically active, see what programs or services your local community or recreation center offer.

# General Cancer Information, Survivorship & Support

**Cancer Support Community** • 888-793-9355 • [www.CancerSupportCommunity.org](http://www.CancerSupportCommunity.org)

**American Cancer Society** • 800-227-2345 • [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

**CancerCare** • 800-813-4673 • [www.cancercare.org](http://www.cancercare.org)

**Cancer.net** • 888-651-3038 • [www.cancer.net](http://www.cancer.net)

**Caregiver Action Network** • 855-227-3640 • [www.caregiveraction.org](http://www.caregiveraction.org)

**Healthcare.gov** • [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov)

**Livestrong Foundation** • 866-673-7205 • [www.livestrong.org](http://www.livestrong.org)

**National Cancer Institute** • 800-422-6237 • [www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov)

**National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine** • 888-644-6226 • [www.nccam.nih.gov](http://www.nccam.nih.gov)

**Patient Advocate Foundation** • 800-532-5274 • [www.patientadvocate.org](http://www.patientadvocate.org)

## Cancer Support Community Resources

**Cancer Support Community's** (CSC) resources and programs are available free of charge. Call 888-793-9355 or visit [www.CancerSupportCommunity.org](http://www.CancerSupportCommunity.org) for more info.

**Cancer Support Helpline**® — Have questions, concerns or looking for resources? Call CSC's toll-free Cancer Support Helpline (888-793-9355), available in 200 languages Mon–Fri, 9 am–9 pm ET.

**Open to Options**® — Preparing for your next appointment? Our trained specialists can help you create a list of questions to share with your doctor. Make an appointment by calling 888-793-9355 or by contacting your local CSC or Gilda's Club.

**Frankly Speaking About Cancer**® — Trusted information for cancer patients and their loved ones is available through publications, online, and in-person programs. [www.CancerSupportCommunity.org/FranklySpeakingAboutCancer](http://www.CancerSupportCommunity.org/FranklySpeakingAboutCancer).

**Services at Local CSCs and Gilda's Clubs** — With the help of 170 locations, CSC and Gilda's Club affiliates provide services free of charge to people touched by cancer. Attend support groups, educational sessions, wellness programs, and more at a location near you. [www.CancerSupportCommunity.org/FindLocation](http://www.CancerSupportCommunity.org/FindLocation).

**MyLifeLine** — CSC's private, online community allows patients and caregivers to easily connect with friends and family to receive social, emotional, and practical support throughout the cancer journey and beyond. Connect with other caregivers by joining the Caregiver Support online discussion board. Sign up at [www.MyLifeLine.org](http://www.MyLifeLine.org).

**Grassroots Network** — Make sure your voice is heard by federal and state policy makers on issues affecting cancer patients and survivors by joining our Network at [www.CancerSupportCommunity.org/become-advocate](http://www.CancerSupportCommunity.org/become-advocate).

**Cancer Experience Registry**® — Help others by sharing your cancer patient or cancer caregiver experience via survey at [www.CancerExperienceRegistry.org](http://www.CancerExperienceRegistry.org).

The Cancer Support Community provides this information as a service. This publication is not intended to take the place of medical care or the advice of your doctor. We strongly suggest consulting your doctor or other health care professionals to answer questions and learn more.

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