Move more
Get active, feel good exercise DVD

GET
ACTIVE
FEEL
GOOD

WE ARE MACMILLAN. CANCER SUPPORT
Physical activity and cancer

Whether you’re living with or after cancer, physical activity can help you make a positive change to your life. It can benefit you mentally and physically. Many people say it helps them feel they’re doing as much as they can to stay strong during treatment. It can also be a way of taking some control and helping with your recovery. Some people may want to make positive changes to their lives after a cancer diagnosis, and taking steps towards a healthier lifestyle can be a big part of this.

You may be a little nervous about building up your activity levels, particularly if this is your first attempt to be more active, or if you haven’t been active for a while. However, research has shown that being more active can make a positive difference to your well-being and recovery. There are many ways you can become more active. Even if it’s just going for a walk, any amount of physical activity is better than none at all.

Is it safe?
You may have concerns about becoming more active, but being active has fewer risks than being inactive. As long as you do what’s safe and comfortable for you, then physical activity can benefit you in many ways. If you’re unsure about what you can do, ask your doctor, nurse, physiotherapist or cancer exercise specialist if you have one.
The benefits of being active

Being active during and after treatment can:

• reduce treatment side effects
• improve your quality of life
• reduce tiredness (fatigue)
• give you more strength and make you fitter
• reduce depression and anxiety
• help look after your bones
• help look after your heart
• help you keep to a healthy weight

There’s also some evidence that being active at the recommended levels and maintaining a healthy weight may reduce the risk of some cancers progressing or coming back. This research is relatively new, and we need more evidence before we can say that this is conclusive. However, there are some good indicators that being more active can make a difference.
If you’ve decided you want to become more active, it’s important to stick to what’s comfortable and safe for you. Your cancer type, treatment and any other conditions you have will influence the sort of activities you should do. If you’re unsure about anything, talk to your doctor, nurse, or cancer exercise specialist.

There are many ways you can become more active. It’s important to do an activity that you enjoy and that fits in with your life.

This could be gardening, walking to the shops, playing with your children or grandchildren in the park, or going to a gym session or class with friends. Or it may mean being more active around your home and reducing the time you spend sitting or lying down. Using this DVD is one way to become more active.
How much to do

During treatment, you may not feel up to being very active, but this will depend on your individual situation and any treatment side effects. Doing what’s comfortable for you, even if that’s just going for some short walks or avoiding being immobile for long periods, can help you feel better.

After treatment, you can try to build up your activity gradually, working towards the recommended levels if possible. If you’ve been inactive for a while, it’s important to start slowly and gradually build up your activity levels. Set realistic and achievable goals that work for you.

If you’re unsure about undertaking a particular activity or exercise, contact your doctor, nurse, physiotherapist or qualified cancer exercise specialist.

Recommended levels of physical activity
In the UK, adults are advised to do at least 2.5 hours of moderate-intensity physical activity per week. This could be 30 minutes of activity on five days of the week, which could be broken up into 10 minutes of activity three times a day. It’s also advisable to do some muscle-strengthening exercises at least twice a week. Older adults at risk of falls should undertake activity to improve coordination and balance on at least two days per week.

Our booklet Physical activity and cancer treatment and our Move more pack have more information.
Ted’s story

‘I was diagnosed with cancer in October 2009. I was quite fit at the time but advised to keep physically active prior to surgery. I did so by walking, which I didn’t particularly enjoy, but it gave me a sense of control. Being fit certainly helped me through a difficult time in surgery but even so, on discharge nearly six weeks later, I was very frail.

As general fitness and strength returned through regular walking and resistance training so did my self-confidence. After a few months I returned to work and then I fulfilled a life-long dream – I bought a sailing boat. I’ve retired now but the boat is keeping me very active!’

Ted demonstrates the advanced exercises on this DVD.
Before using this DVD

If you’re unsure about what activities are safe for you, you might want to show this DVD and booklet to your doctor, nurse or physiotherapist if you have one. You can ask them if there’s anything you need to be cautious about.

Here are some things you may need to consider before using this DVD:

• If you’ve had chemotherapy, you may have low numbers of red blood cells (anaemia). This can make you feel tired and breathless. Your doctor may advise you to only do day-to-day activities until your anaemia improves.

• If you have bone thinning or cancer affecting the bones, you should avoid doing ‘high impact’ exercises such as running or jumping, exercises that put a strain on the area of bone that’s affected, or movements where you could easily fall.

• If your cancer treatment has caused peripheral neuropathy (nerve damage) that’s affected your balance, it’s important to avoid activities where you could easily fall. You could hold onto a chair during exercise to help you balance.

• If you have lymphoedema, you should always wear a compression garment during exercise. Build up the physical activity you do with your arm or leg slowly, and ask your lymphoedema specialist for advice.

• If you’ve just had surgery or have any wounds that are still healing, you shouldn’t use this DVD. However, getting active after surgery is important, so ask your cancer specialist or specialist nurse for advice on what you can do.

• If you have any type of line in, or have other health conditions such as high blood pressure, diabetes, heart, lung or back problems, you should check with a health professional before starting this DVD.

Our booklet Physical activity and cancer treatment also has more information.
Some dos and don’ts before you start this DVD

Do

• Check with your doctor, nurse or health professional if you’re unsure about whether this DVD is right for you at the moment.

• Wear well-fitting shoes, such as trainers or flat comfortable shoes, and loose clothing.

• Drink plenty of water after the DVD or during a break so you don’t get dehydrated.

• Make sure you have plenty of space around you and do the exercises on an even, stable surface.

• Have something healthy to eat that includes carbohydrates about two hours before you start, and a healthy carbohydrate snack (such as a banana) within 30 minutes of finishing.

• Make it fun – perhaps you could do the DVD with a friend.

Don’t

• Exercise if you feel unwell or have symptoms that worry you.

• Continue exercising if you develop a new pain or an existing pain becomes worse.

• Continue if you feel dizzy, have chest pain, a racing heart, breathing problems, or any other sudden symptoms – stop immediately and contact your doctor.

DO HAVE A HEALTHY SNACK
Getting active with this DVD

This DVD is designed for you to be able to complete at home. It provides two to three different levels of each exercise to give you options depending on how you’re feeling.

If you’re currently in the middle of treatment and are feeling tired or having difficulties with balance, or if you haven’t exercised for some time, you may not be up to doing all of the sections of this DVD. You could pick and choose some warm-up or simpler exercises until you feel better or more confident. You can build up the number of exercises you do as your energy or fitness improves.

If you enjoy the DVD and feel able to do the full 60 minutes, you could try building up to doing this three times a week as part of an active lifestyle. However, any amount of physical activity will be beneficial.

Once you’ve used the DVD for a while and are feeling fitter, you may want to consider going to a gym so you can learn new exercises to increase your strength.
What’s included on the DVD?

The programme is made up of four sections that focus on different things:

- mobility and pulse-raising – this can be done on its own or as a warm-up
- cardiovascular exercises
- muscular strength and endurance exercises
- flexibility, balance and cool down.

For some exercises there are different ‘levels’, so you can choose the one that suits you depending on how you’re feeling. It’s important to exercise with the DVD at the pace which is right for you – and this may vary on a daily basis.

**Level 1** is for if you’re feeling tired or have problems with balance – many of the exercises are chair-based.

**Level 2** is a standing option that you can do with or without a chair for support.

**Level 3** is a more challenging option for when you’re feeling fitter and stronger.

**Equipment**

You won’t need any specialist equipment for this DVD. But using light weights, food cans or small bottles of water will make some of the strengthening exercises more challenging.

**Posture**

Try to maintain a good posture throughout this DVD. This will help you engage the core muscles in your tummy and lower back.

If you’re sitting:

- Sit forward on the front third of the chair – with your spine clear of the back of the chair.
- Hips, knees and feet should all be aligned and both feet planted fully and firmly on the floor.
- Sit up tall, lifting your upper body away from your hips.
- Look straight ahead with shoulders relaxed.
- If your back becomes tired during the exercise take a short rest by sitting well back in the chair so your back is fully supported.

If you’re standing:

- Stand with your feet hip-width apart, and your knees slightly bent so they’re not locked
- Stand up straight, lifting your upper body away from your hips
- Keep your shoulders relaxed.
Mariette’s story

‘When I was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2010, I was devastated. I’d had breast cancer 21 years ago and couldn’t believe I was going to have to go through it again.

‘Throughout my cancer treatment it was important for me to carry on competing in fencing championships. I decided to join a gym where I followed a fitness programme designed by my personal trainer. I worked with him to build up my stamina and increase my fitness level.

‘Focusing on my physical fitness was one of the only things that kept me going through my second experience of breast cancer. I carried on training and was able to fulfil my dream of competing at the European Veterans’ Fencing Championships 2011.’

Mariette demonstrates the easier exercises on this DVD.
Next steps

If you’re enjoying being more active but would like to meet new people, walking is a great option. With Walking for Health run by Macmillan and the Ramblers, you can take part in a free short walk nearby to help you get active and stay active at a pace that works for you.

Search for a walk near you at walkingforhealth.org.uk

Walking for Health (England)
www.walkingforhealth.org.uk
020 7339 8541

Paths for all (Scotland)
www.pathsforall.org.uk
01259 218 888

Let’s Walk Cymru (Wales)
www.ramblers.org.uk/letswalkcymru
02920 646890

Walk NI (Northern Ireland)
www.walkni.com

Sports organisations

Whether it’s football, tennis or cycling (or any other sport), the national sports council will be able to give you contact details for individual sports governing bodies and where to find facilities near you.

Sport England
www.sportengland.org
020 7273 1551

Sport Scotland
www.sportscotland.org.uk
0141 534 6500

Useful websites

Spogo Sport and Fitness Finder
www.spogo.co.uk

NHS Choices Health and Fitness
www.nhs.uk/livewell/fitness

Active Scotland
www.activescotland.org.uk
Support on the high street

Cancer is often the toughest fight many people will face. Boots UK and Macmillan are working together to ensure everyone affected by cancer, wherever they are in the UK, has access to the best cancer information and support in their local community.

That’s why Boots Macmillan Information Pharmacists* have chosen to receive bespoke training to support people affected by cancer to deliver personalised cancer information and support in communities across the UK.

The Boots Macmillan Information Pharmacists can show you how to get more information and support for the concerns you may have. They can also help connect you to cancer information services and experts in your local community, signpost you to wider Macmillan services and suggest to you how to become more active.

You don’t need an appointment to see a Boots Macmillan Information Pharmacist; if they are available in your local Boots Store, they will be able to assist you directly. But if not available, any member of the Boots pharmacy team, will be able to signpost you to wider Macmillan services.

*Boots Macmillan Information Pharmacists are not available in all Boots stores. To find your local one visit the store locator on boots.com
Get gardening

Gardening is a great way to enjoy some physical activity at the same time as adding some colour and shape to your garden. The National Gardens Scheme (NGS) is Macmillan’s largest single donor donating almost £14 million to help people affected by cancer since the partnership began in 1985. The NGS supports our Move more campaign, promoting the benefits of gardening and visiting gardens for people’s health, physical and mental well-being.

George Plumptre, Chief Executive of The National Gardens Scheme says: ‘At the NGS many people have shared the health benefits they have experienced from gardening and we would love to help and improve the lives of even more people affected by cancer. Being outdoors is therapeutic and relaxing and can have a positive impact on your recovery. We have many people who now open their gardens to raise funds for Macmillan, because they themselves have been helped and want to share the benefits of their gardens. All our owners look forward to welcoming visitors to their gardens and giving hints and tips for them to take away.’

For more information on The National Gardens Scheme or to find an open garden near you, please visit ngs.org.uk
When the time is right and you’re feeling stronger, you may also want to join Macmillan for one of our fundraising activities. You could join one of our UK-based walks or choose from running, hiking, swimming or cycling.

We couldn’t provide our vital services without the people who support us. So get involved in your local area, sign up for an event or organise your own. Whatever you do will make a massive difference.

Visit macmillan.org.uk/fundraising to find out more.

‘I decided to fundraise for Macmillan by hiking the Andes Mountains in Peru. It gave me a goal to aim for during my treatment which made me extremely positive and focused.’

Michelle, diagnosed with thyroid cancer
Useful resources

You may want to order some of these resources from be.macmillan.org.uk:

Physical activity and cancer treatment
A booklet giving information about being active during and after cancer treatment.

Move more pack
A step-by-step guide to becoming more active, which includes an activity diary and practical advice.

Healthy eating and cancer
A booklet about eating a healthy diet after cancer.

National Gardens Scheme
For more information about gardening and the National Gardens Scheme visit ngs.org.uk or call 01483 211535.

Disclaimer
We make every effort to ensure that the information we provide is accurate and up to date, but it should not be relied upon as a substitute for specialist professional advice tailored to your situation. So far as is permitted by law, Macmillan does not accept liability in relation to the use of any information contained in the publication, or third-party information or websites included or referred to in it.

Thanks
This DVD and booklet have been approved by our chief medical editor, Dr Tim Iveson, Consultant Medical Oncologist. It has been produced by the Survivorship team at Macmillan.

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Thanks also to Ted and Mariette for kindly volunteering their time to take part in the DVD.
When you’re living with and after cancer, physical activity can help you make a positive change in your life.

In this DVD, cancer fitness expert, Dr Anna Campbell, will guide you through three exercise plans which you can complete at home.

Cancer is the toughest fight most of us will ever face. But no one should go through it alone. The Macmillan team is with you every step of the way, from the nurses and therapists helping you through treatment to the campaigners improving cancer care.

Together, we are all Macmillan Cancer Support.

For cancer support every step of the way
Call Macmillan on 0808 808 00 00
(Monday to Friday, 9am-8pm)
or visit macmillan.org.uk