



# Breast Cancer

Cancer poses many challenges, and ongoing evidence continues to strongly identify the beneficial impact that exercise plays in both the physiological and psychological aspects of cancer recovery, both during and post-treatment.

**We highly encourage integrating exercise into your daily life as part of both short & long term treatment and recovery strategies.**

Your goals and the therapeutic effects of exercise are always variable given the complexity of Breast Cancer, and dependent on your diagnosis and treatment path. There are particular benefits of exercise engagement which multitudes of evidence support in regards to treatment tolerance, as well as reducing secondary effects and recurrence. These include;



## Physical

- ◆ Cancer-Related Fatigue management
- ◆ Shoulder functioning and mobility
- ◆ Reduced risk of secondary effects; Lymphoedema, Cardiotoxicity, Peripheral Neuropathy, Axillary Web Syndrome (Cording)
- ◆ Improved bone health & management of body composition
- ◆ Reduced severity of Bone, Arthralgia (Joint), Myalgia (muscle), and Post-Surgical Pain

## Psychosocial

- ◆ Cancer-Related Fatigue management
- ◆ Shoulder functioning and mobility
- ◆ Reduced risk of secondary effects; Lymphoedema, Cardiotoxicity, Peripheral Neuropathy, Axillary Web Syndrome (Cording)
- ◆ Improved bone health & management of body composition
- ◆ Reduced severity of Bone, Arthralgia (Joint), Myalgia (muscle), and Post-Surgical Pain

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**“Breast Cancer survivors who are physically active have a 42% lower risk of mortality from any cause, and a 40% lower risk of mortality from breast cancer than those who are inactive”**

## Tips to Consider:

Guided and specific exercise programming adaptations are required based on disease and treatment-related adverse effects, anticipated disease trajectory, and current health status. Some considerations to remember when you are engaging in exercise include:

- ◆ Exercise tolerance during and directly post-treatment can vary dependant on your treatment dosage.
- ◆ Medication adverse effects – for example, Taxane chemotherapy agents are linked to heightened CIPN (Chemo-induced Peripheral Neuropathy).
- ◆ Compromised immune function – having a higher risk of infection will require adjusting your exercise environment accordingly.
- ◆ Elevated fracture risk with hormone therapy, bony metastases, or Osteoporosis.
- ◆ Complete exercise sessions during times of least fatigue to avoid exacerbation – pacing and monitoring activity regularly.

## Evidence-Based Exercise Guidelines:

- ◆ Find something you enjoy; individual variability is important
- ◆ Current exercise status;
  - Just starting out: slowly spread exercise out across the week – gradually increasing bout durations as you tolerate.
  - Already active with good symptom control: high intensity exercise is not discouraged, as long as appropriate progression to intensity has occurred
- ◆ Exercise with a friend or family member – sharing your experience of cancer and developing social connections.
- ◆ Stay motivated through exercise tracking and diaries to support establishing a routine
- ◆ Tailor and progress exercise as appropriate – guided by a Qualified Therapist

**150 Minutes per week  
Moderate Intensity  
Aerobic Exercise**



**2-3 Sessions per week  
Moderate Intensity  
Resistance Exercise**

### Further Information & References:

Breast Cancer Network Australia: <https://www.bcna.org.au/resources>

Cancer Australia; <https://canceraustralia.gov.au>

Exercise is medicine <http://exerciseismedicine.com.au/resources>

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