

Exercise and Physical Activity for Children, Teens, and Young Adults with Cancer



Why are exercise and physical activity important?

Exercise and activity are an important part of your child's cancer treatment. In general, children and teens who stay active during treatment have better outcomes. Staying active helps keep your child's brain and body strong during and after treatment. Read more about how exercise can help your child below:

Children, teens, and young adults who have had treatment for cancer are at risk for:

- Muscle weakness (steroid myopathy)
- Nerve damage (peripheral neuropathy)
- Problems with balance
- Problems with flexibility
- Lower heart and lung capacity
- Delays in motor skills (running, jumping, hopping)

Is exercise during treatment safe?

- Yes! Research studies show that exercise and physical activity are safe during treatment.
- If you have concerns about your child's ability to be physically active, please follow-up with your medical provider. Your medical team may recommend adjusting your child's exercise or activity based on their bloodwork or symptoms.

How will exercise and activity help my child?

- Promote muscle strength, and flexibility
- Improve balance, motor skills, and general movement
- Promote heart, lung and bone health
- Improve mental health, sleep and sense of well-being
- Boost attention, memory, problem solving and learning
- Fight cancer treatment side effects

What can my child do to stay active?

- Stay out of bed as much as possible (in the hospital and at home)
- Take part in daily routines and chores
- Keep moving and walk more than once a day
- Get dressed and sit up in a chair for meals, watching movies or hanging out
- Lay on your stomach, get on/off the floor for play and exercise
- Play games or sports
- Do exercises as a family

Rehabilitation Services

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