

# Restore

Health and hope for patients and survivors SUMMER 2010

## Plan of Action

Exercise can help those with cancer survive — and thrive



Olga Rosas, City of Hope cancer survivor

*Strive for 30 minutes of cardio exercise daily.*

**D**uring cancer treatment, taking a nap is probably more appealing than going for a brisk walk or heading to yoga class, but working up a sweat or flexing those muscles might be just what the doctor ordered.

Exercise has significant benefits for cancer patients, studies show. Workouts can strengthen immune function, increase appetite and help manage nausea and fatigue. Exercise also reduces the risk for developing certain cancers, decreases the likelihood of recurrence and, in

some cases, improves survival rates.

“We’ve seen consistent results showing a reduction in cancer risk by increasing levels of physical activity,” explains Leslie Bernstein, Ph.D., director of the Division of Cancer Etiology in the Department of Population Sciences at City of Hope.

“Exercise has a positive impact on every system of your body, and studies have shown that it decreases the risk of dying from at least *continued on next page*”

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P. CUNNINGHAM

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two major types of cancer  
[breast and colorectal].”

### Better Survival Rates

Researchers at City of Hope found that breast cancer patients who engaged in moderate exercise throughout their lives had a 35 percent lower risk of dying of the disease than less-active breast cancer patients. Overweight women who exercised at moderate levels had a 48 percent lower risk of breast cancer death.

of developing certain cancers. Bernstein points to research indicating that the risk for breast, colorectal, lung and ovarian cancers is lower for those who regularly exercise.

Training for a marathon — or even a 5K race — isn't required to reap the benefits.

“You don't have to go out

“Exercise has a positive impact on every system of your body.” — Leslie Bernstein

In both populations, vigorous exercise further increased survival rates.

One explanation, according to Bernstein, is that elevated levels of hormones like estrogen and insulin are believed to be linked to breast cancer. Exercise suppresses these hormones, which can lower the risk of breast cancer-related deaths. Exercise might affect inflammation and hormones called growth factors, which may also help.

As for colorectal cancer, patients who regularly exercised after completing treatment for the disease had up to 50 percent lower risk of recurrence and death, according to the National Cancer Institute.

### Take Your Breath Away

Breaking a sweat doesn't just improve survival rates. Physical activity also reduces likelihood

and run miles, but you should be active for at least three to four hours per week,” Bernstein says. “You should be working hard enough to be huffing and puffing and a little out of breath.”

Work out in the living room with an exercise DVD, take a brisk walk around the block, join a group exercise class or ride the stationary bike at the gym. Any type of exercise that increases your heart rate can offer protective health benefits. Even strength-training exercises such as lifting light weights or using resistance bands may be beneficial, Bernstein says.

“Exercise will help you fare better and live longer,” says Bernstein. “That's enough of a reason to get active.”

— *By Jodi Helmer*



  
**HELPING TO HEAL**  
City of Hope's Lymphedema Program uses rehabilitation techniques to ease this treatment side effect. Available with a doctor's referral. For information, please call **626-256-HOPE, ext. 63328.**

## Getting the Doc's OK

There are times when certain forms of exercise might be risky. Before lacing up your sneakers, talk to your doctor to be sure it's safe.

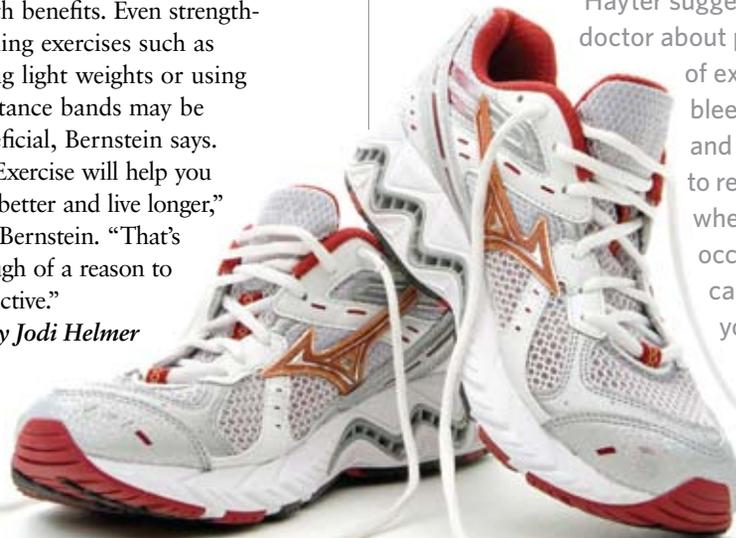
Your doctor will make recommendations for the best exercise program based on your type of cancer and current or recent treatment regimen. Don't wait until after treatment is complete to start talking about exercise.

According to licensed occupational therapist Jennifer Hayter, M.A., OTR/L, CLT-LANA, director of rehabilitation services for City of Hope, some form of exercise, including stretching or strengthening exercises done in a bed or chair, is appropriate during all treatment.

“The real question is not how soon after treatment but what type of exercise is appropriate at any particular stage of treatment or the disease,” she says.

Hayter suggests asking your doctor about possible risks

of exercising, including bleeding and lymphedema, and requesting a referral to rehabilitation services where a physical or occupational therapist can tailor a workout to your specific needs.



# Breast Cancer Body Check

Survivors of childhood cancer can protect themselves from a future cancer diagnosis

By Jill Schildhouse

**Y**ou were voted “most likely to succeed at anything” in your high school yearbook. That’s probably because you fought off something much stronger than teenage bullies and peer pressure: You beat cancer.

Conquering cancer as a child or teen is an undeniable feat of strength and courage. But as any cancer survivor knows, winning that battle is only part of the war. If you’re a young woman who received radiation to your chest during treatment, you could be at increased risk for developing breast cancer as you get older. Take this quick body scan to make sure you’re doing all you can to avoid potential breast cancer risks.

## Stomach

Being overweight and inactive are two risk factors. Lose weight by exercising at least 30 minutes a day on most days of the week, reducing the amount of high-fat foods and alcohol from your diet and eating at least five servings of fruits and vegetables daily.

## Brain

Know your family history. If you have a close relative (mother, sister or daughter) with breast cancer, your risk is increased.

## Mouth

It’s important to tell your health-care provider about your cancer treatment history, including the dose of chest radiation that you received. Arrange for your health-care provider to obtain a written summary of your cancer treatment.

## Lungs

Limit your exposure to potentially harmful chemicals and pesticides. Use protective equipment if you’re exposed to chemicals in your work-place. And if you smoke, quit.

## Breasts

Perform a monthly breast self-exam and report any lumps or changes to your health-care provider right away. Have your provider perform a clinical breast exam at least annually until you reach age 25, then every six months thereafter. Have a yearly mammogram and breast MRI starting at age 25 or eight years after you received radiation (whichever comes last).

## Uterus

If you began menstruating before age 12, entered menopause after age 55, never had a baby or had your first baby after age 30, your breast cancer risk is increased.

## ➔ SUPPORT FOR LIFE

Survivors of pediatric cancer treated at City of Hope can continue to get long-term follow-up care at the medical center. For more information, please e-mail [survivorship@coh.org](mailto:survivorship@coh.org).

# 6/10-9/10

All classes and support groups meet at the Sheri & Les Biller Patient and Family Resource Center, City of Hope, 1500 E. Duarte Road, Duarte, Calif. To sign up, call **626-256-4673** or visit [cityofhope.org](http://cityofhope.org).

## SPECIAL CLASSES

### Gentle Restorative Yoga

**Mondays: 3-4 p.m.**

**Wednesdays: 5:30-6:30 p.m.**

Course includes various yoga postures, development of daily home practice and relaxation techniques.

### Art Therapy

**Tuesdays: 1:30-3 p.m.**

The creative process of art has been shown to increase physical and emotional well-being. Explore drawing, collage, crafts and more. Six-week series.

### Music Therapy

**1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month: 2:30-4 p.m.**

Explore instruments, create

music or come and listen. Music therapy has been shown to relieve stress and increase positive thinking. Preregistration is required.

## SUPPORT GROUPS

### Breast Cancer Support Group

**2nd Tuesday of each month: 6-7:30 p.m.**

Preregistration is required.

### Kidney Cancer Support Group

**1st Monday of each month: 5:30-7:30 p.m.**

Preregistration is required.

### Gynecological Cancer Support Group

**3rd Wednesday of each month: 4-5 p.m.**

Preregistration is required.

### Leukemia, Lymphoma and Multiple Myeloma Support Group

**1st Thursday of each month: 6-7:30 p.m.**

Preregistration is required.

### Lung Cancer Education for Patients

**1st Wednesday of each month: 6-7:30 p.m.**

Preregistration is required.

### Problem-solving Group

*Men and Women Working Together, Getting the Best Out of Each Other.* Call for next date to be offered.



# WALK FOR HOPE

## VISIT THE SURVIVORS' PAVILION

San Francisco — Saturday, June 5  
Philadelphia — Sunday, Sept. 12  
Phoenix — Sunday, Sept. 26  
Seattle — Sunday, Oct. 3  
Chicago — Sunday, Oct. 3  
Washington, D.C. — details coming soon  
Los Angeles — Sunday, Nov. 7

REGISTER NOW! • [walk4hope.org](http://walk4hope.org)