

InFlight

Wellness Weekly



Physical Activity



BREAST CANCER AWARENESS

How Your Weight May Affect Your Risk of Breast Cancer



Managing weight is a challenge for most people in the U.S. In fact, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), more than 70% of American adults are overweight.

This puts them at higher risk for serious conditions including diabetes, heart disease, and some types of cancer. For women, being overweight or obese after menopause increases the risk of breast cancer.

Having more fat tissue can increase your chance of getting breast cancer by raising estrogen levels. Also, women who are overweight tend to have higher levels of insulin, another hormone. Higher insulin levels have also been linked to some cancers, including breast cancer.

BMI in kg/m ²	Weight Category
Below 18.5	Underweight
18.5 to 24.9	Normal
25.0 to 29.9	Overweight
30.0 to 39.9	Obese
40.0 or higher	Severely obese

The standard weight categories based on BMI for adults age 20 years or older

But the connection between weight and breast cancer risk is complicated. Studies suggest the risk appears to be increased for women who gained weight as an adult but may not be increased among those who have been overweight since childhood. Also, having extra fat in the waist area may raise risk more than having extra fat in the hips and thighs.

And even though gaining weight can raise your cancer risk, it's not clear whether losing weight reduces your risk. This turns out to be a tough question for scientists to answer, mainly because very few people actually lose weight during adulthood, and those who do lose weight don't usually keep it off over a long period of time. So it is difficult to find a large enough group of people to study or to be able to study them over an extended length of time.

We do know that avoiding weight gain is helpful, whether you are overweight now or not. If you're carrying extra pounds, losing as little as 5%-10% of your weight improves your overall health. A good goal for most overweight women is to drop half a pound per week for 6 months. What's more, exercise can also lower breast cancer risk above and beyond the impact it can have on losing weight. Many studies have found that exercise is a breast-healthy habit. As little as 75 to 150 minutes of brisk walking each week has been shown to lower risk.

How Your Weight May Affect Your Risk of Breast Cancer. Retrieved from <https://www.cancer.org/latest-news/how-your-weight-affects-your-risk-of-breast-cancer.html>

Obesity and Cancer. Retrieved from <https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/causes-prevention/risk/obesity/obesity-fact-sheet>



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See calendar on other side to see what is going on this week

Why exercise?

Physical activity has many benefits for people who've had treatment for breast cancer, from reducing fatigue to helping regain a sense of control.

Regular physical activity can help maintain or improve your health during and after treatment. It can:

- help avoid or reduce some side effects of cancer treatment, such as fatigue, weight gain, osteoporosis and lymphoedema
- improve your long-term health, reducing the risk of heart attacks and strokes, and may reduce the risk of the cancer coming back
- help your mental wellbeing by reducing anxiety, stress, depression and improving your mood
- prevent or reduce the loss of muscle tone and general fitness that can happen during and after treatment

How much physical activity?

Generally, people who've had a breast cancer diagnosis are recommended to do the same amount of physical activity as the general population. According to national guidelines, adults should do at least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity such as brisk walking (or 75 minutes of vigorous activity such as running) every week. They should also do some muscle-strengthening activities on at least two days a week.

Before starting any type of activity, talk to your treatment team or GP.

Exercise and breast cancer. Retrieved from <https://www.breastcancercare.org.uk/information-support/facing-breast-cancer/living-beyond-breast-cancer/your-body/physical-activity-breast-cancer>

A Personal Message From Your Health Promotion Health Myth Busting Team



Dear Health Myth Busters,

I have a family member that was diagnosed with breast cancer and she's been reading online about whether she can continue to exercise during and after her treatments. There are a lot of different opinions on whether this is ok and I want to be sure I'm giving her accurate information. Is it ok and/or advisable?

Sincerely,
Safe to Exercise?

Dear Safe to Exercise,

I'm sorry to hear about her diagnosis with breast cancer. First and foremost, she should talk to her doctor and her cancer care team on what is best for her. In the past, people being treated for cancer were often told by their doctor to rest and reduce their physical activity. This is good advice if movement causes pain, rapid heart rate, or shortness of breath. But newer research has shown that exercise is not only safe and possible during cancer treatment, but it can improve how well you function physically and improve your quality of life.

Too much rest can lead to loss of body function, muscle weakness, and reduced range of motion. Today, many cancer care teams are urging their patients to be as physically active as possible during cancer treatment. Many people are learning about the advantages of being physically active after treatment, too.

The ability to exercise during treatment will depend on her overall health and physical condition before the diagnosis. If she didn't exercise at all, then she would need to start very slowly and carefully and only after she has her doctor's OK. If she exercised regularly before her diagnosis, keeping to the routine may help her remember that there are parts of her life that are still intact. Also, she should remember that she's the only person who knows how she really feels. She shouldn't overdo it and she should rest when she needs it. Again, make sure she has her doctor's OK before she starts.

Sincerely,
Health Myth Busters

Exercise During and After Treatment. Retrieved from <https://www.breastcancer.org/tips/exercise/treatment>

Got questions on other health issues related to sleep health, physical activity, tobacco, or nutrition? Share them with us and we will help you "Bust The Myths!" Send your questions to usaf.jbsa.afmsa.mbx.hpo@mail.mil. Make sure to include in the subject line "Health Myth Buster." For more online health tips visit the Air Force Health Promotion webpage <https://www.airforcemedicine.af.mil/Resources/Health-Promotion/> or https://www.facebook.com/Joint-Base-Andrews_Health-Promotion_120094328077726

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Your Local Health
Promotion Office



Contact: Sylvia Goff, Health Promotion Coordinator, JBA

Phone: 240-612-1745

Email: sylvia.a.goff.civ@mail.mil

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<p>Taking Action - Healthy Weight Management Mondays at 1500 Register at: 240-612-2703/857-7186</p>	<p>Tobacco Cessation Program Tuesdays at 1500 Register at: 240-857-7186</p>	<p>Group Lifestyle Balance - Pre-Diabetes Wednesdays at 1200 Register at: 240-612-2678</p>	<p>Freedom from Sleep Troubles - Sleep Optimization Thursdays at 1400 Register at: 240-612-1130/857-7186</p>	<p>Health Habit Workshop - Making Changes Stick Fridays at 1300 Register at: 240-857-7186</p>
<p>Comprehensive Fitness Incentive Program (C-FIP) 12 wk prgm - Mon/Wed/Fri 0700-0800, Tactical Fitness Ctr, Register at: https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050f4ea4a62ca7f85-cfip</p>				