

Intended Use: These recommendations are for use by non-exercise professionals, when advising exercise to prevent or reduce cancer related fatigue, for different cancer fatigue levels.

Regular exercise, when safe to do so, should be recommended to all patients to prevent and treat cancer related fatigue. The frequency, intensity, time and type of exercise recommended will vary from person to person.

People who have trouble commencing, maintaining and/or progressing an exercise program due to issues with their cancer related fatigue should be referred to an exercise professional such as a Physiotherapist or Exercise Physiologist with experience in cancer related fatigue.

General Recommendations (All Fatigue Levels)

- Emphasise quality of life and cancer fatigue symptom benefits of physical activity
- Educate regarding self-monitoring for CRF before, during and after exercising

Exercise Duration

- Start with exercise that the person can achieve at baseline. ***It is important not to set the bar too high.***
- Encourage continued exercise programs before, during and after treatment for prevention of deconditioning and management of cancer fatigue
- Encourage people to slowly build up to 150 minutes of exercise per week

Exercise Type

- Begin with an exercise type familiar to the patient

Exercise Progression

- Gradually increase a) frequency, b) time, c) intensity. Monitor for fluctuations in CRF

Introducing exercise for Mild Fatigue

- Emphasise the health and survival benefits of exercise ahead of fatigue prevention.
- Reinforce that the exercise guidelines for people living with cancer are neither applicable to, nor achievable by everyone. Benefits for cancer fatigue can be achieved with less exercise.

If the patient has an active exercise regime:

- Encourage them to continue with current program and monitor cancer fatigue symptoms.
- Encourage them to seek assistance if cancer related fatigue worsens.

If the patient does not have an active exercise regime:

- If medically safe, encourage patient to commence an exercise program of familiar exercise (if possible)
OR
- Encourage patient to join community based exercise programs within their tolerance level (e.g. walking groups/yoga).

Introducing exercise for Moderate Fatigue

- Reinforce that the exercise guidelines for people living with cancer are not applicable to or achievable by everyone. Exercise benefits can still be achieved with multiple 10 minute bouts of exercise.

Exercise Type

- Independent program of familiar exercise e.g. walking with fatigue self-monitoring
OR
- Group based community programs, if possible cancer specific

High Comorbid Risk*

- Screening by Allied Health Professional e.g. Physio / Exercise Physiologist
- Independent exercise program if patient has a familiar exercise with CRF monitoring
OR
- Group exercise supervised by health professional with relevant experience

Advanced Cancer

- Independent program of familiar exercise e.g. walking with fatigue self-monitoring
OR
- Group or individual community based program with AHP with cancer knowledge
OR
- Substitute physical household tasks for formalised exercise (e.g. sweeping, laundry)

**Comorbid Risk: Pre-existing comorbidities or complications from treatment that may affect ability to participate in an exercise program other than that of Cancer related fatigue.*

Severe Fatigue Recommendations

- Screen for falls/# risk and functional mobility status.
- Occupational Therapy referral for safety in Activities of Daily Living
- Referral to exercise professional for individualised program (physiotherapist or exercise physiologist with experience working with cancer fatigue).

Exercise Type

- Begin with an exercise type familiar to the patient. Aim for 10+ minutes at low intensity.
- Gradually increase a) frequency, b) time, c) intensity.
OR
- Suggest gentle exercise and self-monitoring for cancer fatigue levels
OR
- Incorporate functional tasks into home-based exercise program (e.g. laundry, sweeping)