

MOVE MORE



Your guide to
becoming more active

MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT
RIGHT THERE WITH YOU

About this guide

Taking part in physical activity before, during and after cancer treatment can have many health benefits. It can help prevent and manage some of the effects of treatment, such as fatigue, depression and risks to your heart health.

Lots of people say physical activity helps them feel more like they did before cancer. It can also help you take back control.

This is your step-by-step guide to becoming more active.

Here you will find tips on choosing which activity to do and where to get support. If you have not been active for a while or are new to being active, this guide will help you set realistic and achievable goals. We have included some tips to help you get started, information on how to set goals and an activity diary to help you keep track of how you are doing.

Many people find it helps to get active with a family member or friend. You could work through this guide with them, to make getting active part of your time together.

Quotes

In this guide we have included quotes from people affected by cancer, who have found getting active has helped them. These are from people who have chosen to share their story with us. To share your story, visit [macmillan.org.uk/shareyourstory](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/shareyourstory)

Inside the front pocket of this guide

You will find useful information to help you become more active, including the following:

- **Physical activity and cancer booklet** – this has information about the benefits of being physically active and the types of activity that may be right for you.
- Five short flyers about some popular types of physical activity – **Activity in daily life, Walking, Swimming, Gardening and Sport.**
- **Activity chart** – you could put this on your fridge or wall, so that you can see what you have achieved each day.
- **Move more DVD** – this has activity videos you can do at home.

Support online

We also have lots of useful information on our website.

Visit **macmillan.org.uk/beactive** to:

- sign up to our regular newsletters for more advice and tips about becoming active
- find activities in your local area
- ask our experts questions about being active
- join our Online Community to share your experiences and meet others who have used this guide to become more active.

You can also call the Macmillan Support Line free on **0808 808 00 00**, 7 days a week, 8am to 8pm, for more information. If you are hard of hearing, you can use textphone **0808 808 0121**, or Text Relay. If you would prefer to speak to us in another language, interpreters are available.

Contents

Getting started

Pages 5 to 11

Thinking about why you want to get active can help you get started. This section has space for you to write down your reasons for becoming active. It also has some tips for getting started and staying motivated.

Setting goals and staying active

Pages 13 to 41

Setting yourself goals can help you stay active. This section has information to help you set achievable goals, and an activity diary where you can track your progress each week.



GETTING STARTED

Getting started	6
10 top tips	8
Questions to help you get started	10

Getting started

It is important to keep active. But you may need to be careful with the activities you choose. This will depend on the cancer, your treatment, its side effects and any other medical conditions you might have.

Chemotherapy, radiotherapy or recent surgery can affect the type of activity that is safe for you. For example, chemotherapy increases your risk of infection. If you are at increased risk of infection, your doctor may advise you to avoid swimming pools or gyms. If you have long-term treatment effects, such as lymphoedema or nerve damage, you will also need advice on which activities are safe for you.

Most types of light physical activity are safe during and after cancer treatment. If you are thinking of starting a new sport or exercise plan, you might want to speak to your cancer doctor or specialist nurse. They can give you some advice, or they might refer you to a physiotherapist or cancer exercise specialist.

The **Physical activity and cancer** booklet in the front of this guide has more information about activities that are safe for you. It also has information about who can help with physical activity.

We have lots of tips for getting started on the following pages. Setting realistic targets and keeping a record of your progress will help you stay active (see pages 14 to 20).

When you have started, you will probably find being active becomes an enjoyable part of your life. Many people notice the benefits quite quickly, such as feeling less tired and stressed, and having more confidence. Noticing these changes and knowing the benefits to your health can keep you motivated, even on difficult days. If you are struggling, do not feel disappointed.



10 top tips

Getting active may be a big lifestyle change, and being active during or after a condition like cancer might not be easy. Here are some top tips on how to get started and keep going:

1. Think about the benefits

This is about what you hope to achieve from being more active, and the benefits for your health.

2. Set specific, achievable goals

This could include being more active around the house, going for a walk or participating in an exercise class. You need to make sure your goal is right for you. Even just preparing to be more active is a goal.

3. Do not get disheartened

If you do not achieve a goal, think about what went wrong and set a new or different goal.

4. Build up gradually

Do not try to do too much, too soon.

5. Track your progress

Keep a record of how active you have been and how you felt afterwards. You could use our 12-week activity diary (see pages 26 to 41). You might also find it useful to use a pedometer or fitness tracker to track how many steps you do each day. Visit shop.macmillan.org.uk for more information.

6. Make it social

Try being active with other people, such as family or friends, or other people with cancer. Or you could join a group or a club. Share your plans with other people who are supportive.

7. Enjoy yourself

Find activities that are right for you and that you enjoy.

8. Try new activities

Some people find that once they feel they can do more, trying something different helps them stay motivated.

9. Make it a habit

Try to include more activity in your daily life. You could sit less, take the stairs instead of the lift, or walk and carry the shopping instead of taking the car.

10. Reward yourself

It is important to reward your achievements, no matter how small. You could buy a book you want, give yourself some 'me time' or go on a trip. But try to avoid unhealthy treats that might have a negative impact on other goals. You can record your achievements on our 12-week activity diary (see pages 26 to 41), and encourage your family and friends to do the same.

Remember, you can ask for advice from your cancer specialist or GP if you have any questions about becoming more active. They may refer you to an exercise specialist or physiotherapist.

Questions to help you get started

When you are making an important lifestyle change, it can be helpful to think about why you are doing it and what you would like to achieve.

Having someone to be active with can help motivate you. You might want to talk about these questions with family or friends to help you get started.

What are your top 3 reasons for becoming more active?

Many people find it helpful to think about their own personal reasons for becoming more active. This could be something as simple as 'I want to improve my mood', or 'I want to do everyday things that I used to take for granted'. You can use the space below to write this down.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Reminding yourself of these reasons when you set your future goals could help keep you motivated (see page 14).

How might life be different?

Looking forward a few weeks or months, think about how life might be if you became more active. Write down the good things you might feel, or what might be different for you. For example, this could be 'I would feel more in control' or 'I would feel more independent.'

Then imagine if you did not take the opportunity to become more active and what your worries might be. For example, this might be 'I would need to rely on other people to help me get around' or 'I would not have much energy'.

We understand you might find this difficult or emotional, so you could think about asking someone you trust to help you.

Now make a commitment to moving more

Share your commitment with your family or friends, so you can move more together. You might want to write down who might be there to support you. We have more information about the types of activity you might enjoy in the **Physical activity and cancer** booklet in the front of this guide.



SETTING GOALS AND STAYING ACTIVE

How to set goals	14
Tracking your progress	18
Action plan	22
My activity diary	25
Your notes and questions	42

How to set goals

It is important to set goals that are achievable for you. Start at a level that suits you and do not try to do too much, too soon. Find an activity you like and then slowly build up how long you do it for and how often. Build up how much you do at your own pace. For example, if you enjoy walking, start by aiming for 10 minutes and then try slowly building up the length and speed of your walks. You could also try going for a walk more often.

How you feel may change from day to day, so listen to your body to work out what types of activity feel right for you.

Your future goal

You may find it helpful to set yourself a target for the next few weeks or months. Think about your interests, your current level of activity, the type of cancer you have and your treatment.

Here are two examples of future goals:

- 'I will join my local walking group so that in 3 weeks' time I can get to the shops on my own.'
- 'I want to find a class at the leisure centre for people with long-term conditions. I want my arms to be strong enough to lift my grand-daughter at Christmas.'

Encourage your family and friends to join you, and try to co-ordinate your goals so you can help and support each other. You might find it helpful to look back at what you wrote about how life might be different if you became more active (see pages 22 to 23).

If this helps you, try thinking about what you would like to achieve from being more active, and how you would like to feel in a few weeks or months.

Now try writing down your future goal:

Once you have a future goal, you can start to set yourself some short-term goals to help you work towards it.



Your short-term goals

Slowly build up the amount you do, to help you achieve your goal. This can help you stay motivated when you are getting started. Remember to start slowly. Build up to a comfortable level and go at your own pace. If you are going through treatment, you might only be able to do a certain level of activity. Try to work around your treatment by making the most of your good days and resting when you need to.

Here are two examples of short-term goals that could help you work towards a future goal:

- ‘On Monday at 10am, I will walk in the park for 10 minutes with my friend Harry.’
- ‘On weekdays, I will walk on the spot for 5 minutes every hour with my wife.’

Try not to set too many goals at once. It is a good idea to make your goals as specific as possible.

Where you can, try to include:

- when you will do the activity
- what activity you will do and for how long
- who you will do the activity with, or who might be able to support you.

Try writing your first short-term goal now:

You can set more short-term goals each week in our 12-week activity diary (see pages 26 to 41).

Overcoming barriers

It can be helpful to think about things that could get in the way of you becoming and staying more active. This could be the weather, holidays, working late, feeling unwell or not being motivated. For example, if you have bladder or bowel problems, you might be worried about finding a toilet quickly.

Think about how you could overcome these barriers to being active. For example, this might mean doing an indoor activity instead, joining a walking group or exercise class, or going with a relative or friend.

Look back at the short-term goal you have just set. What might get in the way of you achieving it? What could you do to avoid those barriers?

For example, you might write 'On Monday at 10am, I will walk in the park for 10 minutes with my friend Harry. If something gets in the way, I will do the **Move more DVD** at home.'

Tracking your progress

This 12-week activity diary (see pages 26 to 41) will help you track your progress. You can use it to set yourself some short-term goals each week. There is space to record your activity and how it made you feel for 12 weeks.

Using the activity diary

Using the diary will also help you see whether you have set the right goals. You can change them if they are too challenging, or not challenging enough. The following examples show you how to use the diary.

My goal this week:

On Monday at 10am I will walk in the park for 10 minutes with my friend Harry. If something gets in the way, I will do the **Move more DVD** at home.

When	What	How long	How I felt afterwards
Monday 10am	Walk with Harry	10 mins	Refreshed, slept much better

My goal this week:

On weekdays I will walk on the spot for 5 minutes every hour with my wife. If something gets in the way, I will do some stretches instead.

When	What	How long	How I felt afterwards
Monday every hour	Walk on spot with my wife	5 mins	Like I'm taking control

You might prefer to record your activity in the calendar on your smart phone, if you have one.

Rewarding yourself

It is important to reward your achievements, no matter how big or small. Think of something you enjoy, and reward yourself when you achieve your goal. There is space in the activity diary to write how you will reward yourself each week. For example, you might write 'I will reward myself by going to the cinema to see a film.'

If you do not achieve your goal, do not be disheartened. This is an opportunity to have another look at your short-term goals and set a new goal that you can achieve.

Using the activity chart

You can use the activity chart at the front of this guide to record how you are doing each day. You could put this chart somewhere you can see it easily. It has space for 12 weeks of activity. Your family and friends could record their activities on it too.

We have more information and ideas about getting active. Visit [macmillan.org.uk/beactive](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/beactive) Here you can:

- sign up to our regular newsletters for more advice and tips about becoming active
- find activities in your local area
- ask our experts questions about being active
- join our Online Community to share your experiences and meet other people who have used this guide to become more active.

You can also call the Macmillan Support Line free on **0808 808 00 00** (7 days a week, 8am to 8pm) for more information and support.

'You don't have to run a marathon, you don't have to lift heavy weights, you don't even have to sweat. Exercise is a great way to build up energy levels and strength'

Pete



Encourage family and friends to set goals too, so you can get active together

Action plan

Some people find it useful to summarise their reasons for wanting to move more and make an action plan to help make it happen. Looking back at this as you start to get active can help keep you motivated.

Try to fill in the gaps below with your plan for moving more. Your family or friends can write down their plans too, so you can keep each other motivated. It might help you to look back at what you wrote in the getting started section (see pages 10 to 11).

I want to move more because:

To do this, I am going to:

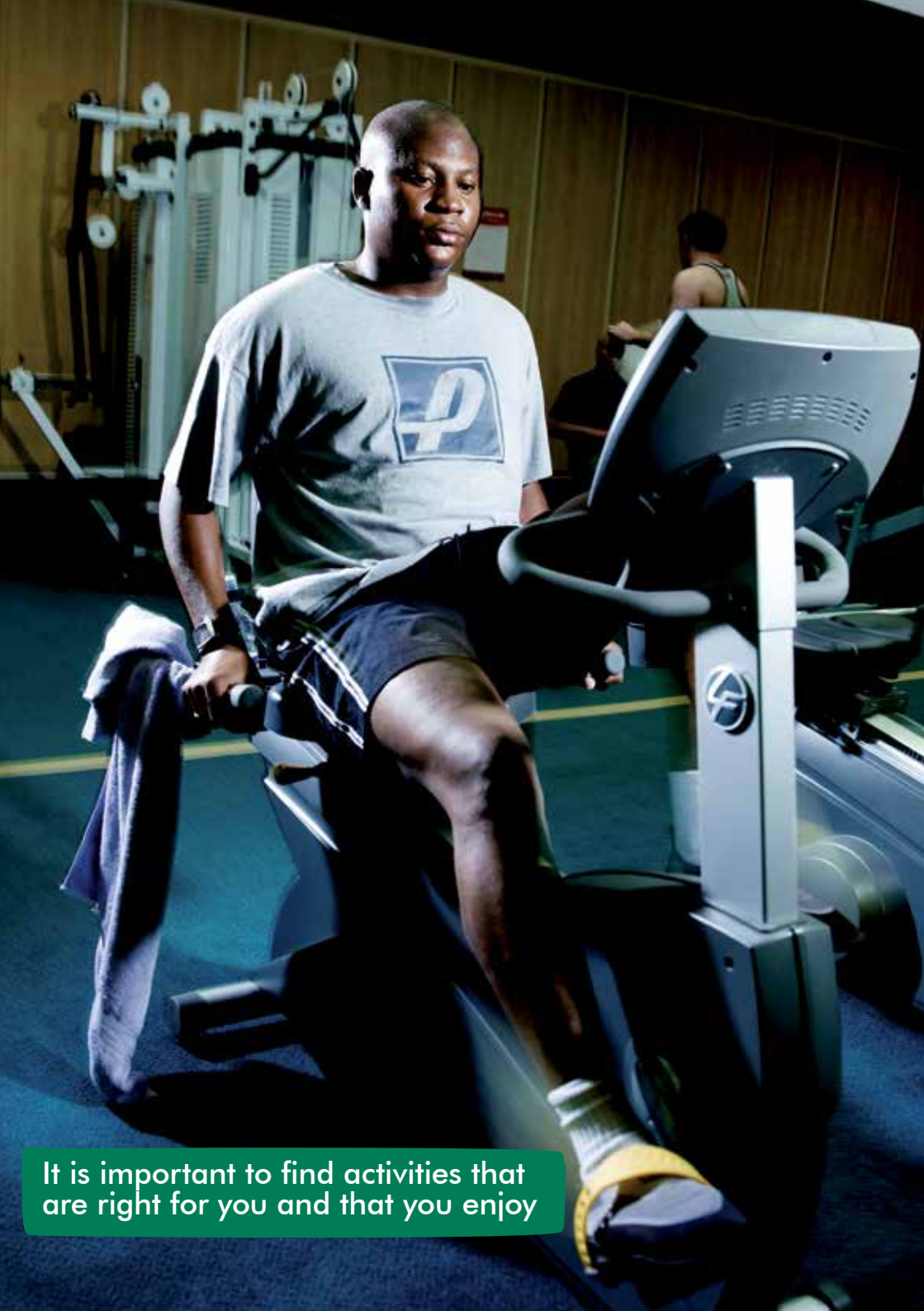
I will do this with:

Things that might get in my way are:

I will overcome these barriers by:

I will reward myself with:

Why not share your plan with other **Move more** users on our Online Community? Your story could inspire other people who are trying to be more active. Visit [macmillan.org.uk/beactive](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/beactive) for more information.



It is important to find activities that are right for you and that you enjoy

My activity diary

Over the next few pages you will find a 12-week activity diary, where you can record:

- your goals for becoming active
- what might get in the way of you achieving your goal
- how you will overcome those barriers
- how you will reward your achievements
- the details of your activity and how you felt after doing it.

'Setting myself little, achievable goals and taking small steps everyday over a period of time to become more active has given me my life back.'

Lorraine

WEEK

Date:

My goals this week

1.

2.

3.

I will reward myself by _____

When	What	How long	How I felt afterwards

Remember you can also record your achievements on your activity chart in the front of this guide.

Date:

My goals this week

1.

2.

3.

I will reward myself by _____

When	What	How long	How I felt afterwards

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When	What	How long	How I felt afterwards

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Congratulations on being active for 12 weeks!

For lots more support and information, visit our website at [macmillan.org.uk/beactive](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/beactive) You can also call our cancer support specialists for more information on **0808 808 00 00**.

Remember you can also record your achievements on your activity chart in the front of this guide.



Disclaimer

We make every effort to ensure that the information we provide is accurate and up to date but it should not be relied upon as a substitute for specialist professional advice tailored to your situation. So far as is permitted by law, Macmillan does not accept liability in relation to the use of any information contained in this publication, or third-party information or websites included or referred to in it. Some photos are of models.

Thanks

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Thanks also to the people affected by cancer who reviewed this guide, and those who shared their stories.

We welcome feedback on our information. If you have any, please contact **cancerinformationteam@macmillan.org.uk**

Sources

We have listed a sample of the sources used in this publication below.

If you would like further information about the sources we use, please contact us at **cancerinformationteam@macmillan.org.uk**

BBC Get Inspired. www.bbc.co.uk/sport/get-inspired (accessed February 2016).

Thomas, et al. Physical activity after cancer: an evidence review of the international literature. *British journal of medical practitioners*. 7(1) a708. 2014.

Webb. Developing a health promotion campaign to influence physical activity in people living with cancer. Unpublished manuscript. University of Hertfordshire, UK. 2016.

RECORD YOUR DAILY ACHIEVEMENTS

Physical activity lifts your spirits and can be enjoyed by everyone. Do something you enjoy: walking, gardening, swimming – the list is endless. Not only will you feel healthier, but you may meet new friends along the way.

Rachel Bryce, Breast Care
 Specialist Nurse, Bedford Hospital

Physical activity really helped a lot. Fatigue was a big thing for me, but just walking around the garden or something small like that helped me feel good. Exercise helped my recovery so much.

Ellis, diagnosed with leukaemia

Keep this somewhere you can see it easily, such as on your fridge, and record how you're doing each day.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Week starting / /	week one						
Week starting / /	week two						
Week starting / /	week three						
Week starting / /	week four						

Record your daily achievements

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Week starting / /	week five						
Week starting / /	week six						
Week starting / /	week seven						
Week starting / /	week eight						

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Week starting / /	week nine						
Week starting / /	week ten						
Week starting / /	week eleven						
Week starting / /	week twelve						

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Lots of people say physical activity helps them feel more like they did before cancer. It can also help you take back control. This is your step-by-step guide to becoming more active.

We're here to help everyone with cancer live life as fully as they can, providing physical, financial and emotional support. So whatever cancer throws your way, we're right there with you. For information, support or just someone to talk to, call **0808 808 00 00** or visit **macmillan.org.uk**

Would you prefer to speak to us in another language? Interpreters are available. Please tell us in English the language you would like to use. Are you deaf or hard of hearing? Call us using NGT (Text Relay) on **18001 0808 808 00 00**, or use the NGT Lite app.

Need information in different languages or formats? We produce information in audio, eBooks, easy read, Braille, large print and translations. To order these, visit **macmillan.org.uk/otherformats** or call our support line.

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