

# Living well with cancer – keeping active

Te noho ora me te matepukupuku –  
te noho ngangahau



**Cancer  
Society**

Te Kāhui Matepukupuku  
o Aotearoa





**“Fresh air, exercise and humour are essential.”**

*The Tauranga Cancer Society walking group.*

This resource is for people living with cancer who want to keep active. Keeping active before, during and after cancer treatment is important for your health and wellbeing. Find out how to keep active and the health benefits of physical activity in this booklet.

**“Keeping active, even just a little bit, can go a long way to making you feel better and more ‘human’”**  
**Victoria**

Mā te hunga kua pā te matepukupuku engari e hiahia ana ki te noho ngangahau tēnei rauemi

He mea nui mō tō hauora te noho kakama i mua i te wā o te maimoa matepukupuku, i te wā o ngā maimoa hoki, tae noa ki te wā i muri mai i ngā maimoa. Rapua i tēnei puka, me pēhea te noho kakama, me ngā huanga hauora o te korikori i te tinana.

# Be as active as possible before, during, and after treatment

Research shows keeping active can help you cope better with cancer treatment. It may also reduce the risk of some cancers coming back.

Physical activity can benefit you before, during, and after cancer treatment by:

- making your muscles and bones stronger
- increasing your energy levels
- improving your mood
- helping manage some of the side effects of treatment
- speeding up recovery
- improving your heart health
- reducing your risk of new cancers and other health problems.

Ka whai hua koe mā te korikori tinana i mua i te wā o te maimoatanga matepukupuku, i te wā e whai ana hoki koe, tae noa ki te wā i muri mai i ngā maimoa mā te:

- whakapakari ake i ō ua me ō kōiwi
- whakapiki i tō taumata pūngao
- te whakapai ake i tō ahua
- āwhina i te haere o ētahi o nga papātanga ki te taha
- whakatere i tō hoki ki te ora

**Being active has been shown to be safe for people with cancer.**

**Kua mōhiotia, mā te noho kakama ka noho haumaruru te hunga pāngia ana ki te matepukupuku**

# How active should you be during treatment?

Any exercise is a positive way to look after yourself.

**Talk to your treatment team before starting any new exercise routines. Ask them about exercises that might be helpful for you.**

He mea pai hei tiaki I a koe ngā mahi korikori, ahakoa aha.

Kōrero ki tō rōpū maimoa i mua I tō tīmata i ētahi whakahaerenga korikori hou. Uiuitia rātou mō ngā korikori tērā pea ka āwhina i a koe.

Some treatments can affect the type of activity that is safe for you. There are some situations where public pools or gyms might not be best for someone undergoing cancer treatment. But for most people these will be safe. The benefits of exercise are important, any possible risks should be discussed with your treatment team.

If you were fit and active before cancer, you may have to lower the intensity of your workouts for a while.

You might feel nervous about starting a new exercise routine, especially if you feel tired or are worried that you might injure yourself. Research shows that even a little activity is better than no activity at all. Start slowly and build up the amount of activity you do.

**It is not safe to start intense exercise that you are not used to.**

**Ehara i te mea haumaruru te tīmata korikori uaua mehemea kāre anō nei koe i ata waia.**



**Any extra activity is good even if it's just a walk to the letter box.**

**He pai nga mahi korikori tāpiri, ahakoa he hīkoi noa iho ki te pouaka mēra.**

## Exercise that may work for you

If you are low in energy you could spread your activity across the day. Take a few shorter walks rather than one long walk.

Find an activity that you enjoy and matches your current fitness level. Low-impact, weight-bearing activities such as: walking, dancing, climbing stairs, swimming, cycling can be helpful.

People who are less mobile can benefit from activities such as:

- bed and chair exercises
- balance training
- walking with a mobility aid for support.

Yoga and tai chi combine gentle movement with meditation and breathing exercises.

Physiotherapists or occupational therapists at your treatment centre may be able to help you with your exercise programme.



## Things to be aware of when exercising

You should stop exercising immediately if you get any of the following:

- chest pain
- dizziness
- a racing heart
- breathing problems
- feeling sick
- unusual back or bone pain
- unusual muscle pain
- a headache that does not go away.

Speak to your doctor if you notice any of these, or any other symptoms.

Me tere tonu tō mutu i te mahi korikori mēnā ka puta tētahi o ēnei:

- he mamae ki te uma
- te nihinihi
- kei te oma te manawa
- he raruraru ki te whakahā
- kei te māuiui koe
- he mamae rerekē ki tō tua, ki ō kōiwi rānei
- he mamae rerekē ki ō ua
- ka ānini mutunga-kore te māhunga

Me kōrero ki tō Rata mehemea ka rongu koe i tētahi o ēnei, i ētahi atu tohumate rānei. .



Remember to be sun safe if you are exercising or working outside in the daylight saving months

Remember to be SunSmart



**Slip, slop, slap and wrap!**

# Keeping active after cancer treatment

After cancer treatment, starting a new exercise programme and making positive lifestyle changes, can help your recovery.

After treatment build up your level of activity slowly and balance this with periods of rest. Discuss what exercise might be best for you with your GP.

**“I often broke my walks up into achievable times or distances. For example, after surgery I did 3 lots of 10 minute walks a day. I'd note how far I got in that 10 minutes then try and improve on that the next time, even if it was just a few steps.”**  
**Victoria**

Ka mutu ana ngā maimoa, me āta whakapiki haere tō taumata korikori, ka whakatairite hoki me ngā wā whakatā ai. Kōrero ki tō GP e pā ana ki ngā mahi korikori pai mōu.

**Even a small amount of regular activity, such as walking, can be beneficial to both your physical and mental wellbeing.**

**Ka whaihua tō oranga tinana, oranga wairua hoki mā te whai korikori auau pērā ki te hīkoiko, ahakoa iti noa iho tō korikori.**

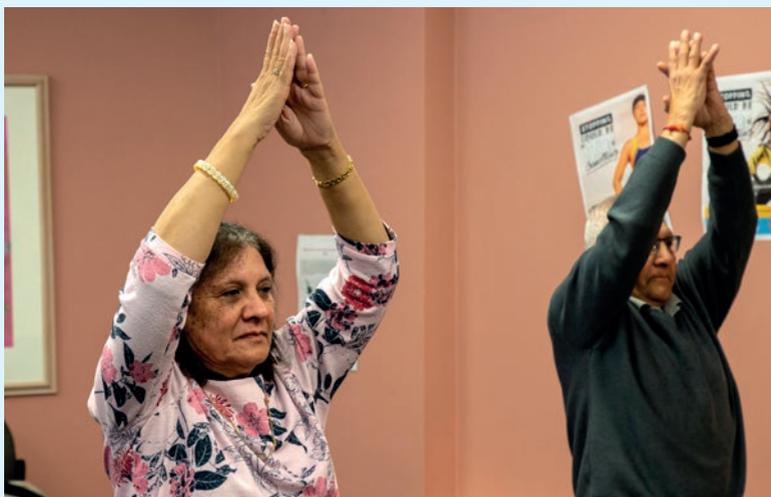


Cancer Society Nelson provide an eight week gym programme during or post cancer treatment.

**“After a year of treatment and not having any energy, I felt mentally stronger after each session at the gym. The programme was designed to suit my needs and helped with my recovery.”**  
**Ashley**

## Useful ways for you to increase your physical activity

- Some people find the support from a gym helpful or a local walking group may help you take part in regular exercise. Your local Cancer Society may have an activity class that you could join such as: walking groups, yoga classes, gym programmes and healthy steps classes.
- You could look for an approved strength and balance class in your area on the **Live Stronger for Longer** website [www.livestronger.org.nz](http://www.livestronger.org.nz). This site has practical information and advice on how to stay active for people who are less active and over 65.
- Others have found a referral from their GP to a Green Prescription provider useful. Find out more at this link: <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/preventative-health-wellness/physical-activity/green-prescriptions>



Cancer Society Wellington yoga class

- You may find joining a PINC & STEEL programme helpful. PINC & STEEL programmes are run throughout the country and offer a range of activities designed to help people through every stage of their treatment and recovery.  
[www.pincandsteel.com](http://www.pincandsteel.com)
- Healthy-Steps programmes are designed for people affected by lymphoedema or to provide general exercise programmes after treatment. They are provided in some Cancer Society centres. See more here:

[www.cancernz.org.nz](http://www.cancernz.org.nz)



Every week the Cancer Society in Christchurch runs an exercise class at the local swimming pool to help people manage their lymphoedema.

***“I can really feel the benefits for my lymphatic system during and after the class. I love the camaraderie of the group and am enjoying the support of others and the chance to have a laugh.”***



**Sit less, move more**  
**Break up long periods of sitting**

***Me iti ake ngā wā noho,  
me piki ake hoki tō  
korikori haere***

- stand up and stretch every hour.
- have standing or walking meetings at work.
- stand while travelling on buses, trains and ferries.
- get off the bus or train one stop earlier and walk the rest of the way, or park further away.
- go for a walk instead of watching TV or on electronic devices.
- stand while texting or talking on the phone.



**Do at least 2½ hours of moderate or 1¼ hours of vigorous physical activity spread throughout the week**

***Whāia kia kua e iti ake i te 2½ hāora te mahi korikori ngāwari noa kapi i te kotahi wiki, 1½ hāora rānei mehemea he korikori tinana tūkaha***

- Being physically active every day is better for you than doing all your activity on one or two days a week.
- do at least 30 minutes of moderate, or 15 minutes of vigorous physical activity on five days a week.
  - break up your activity sessions into small chunks that you do more often, such as 10 minutes at a time.
  - try fast walking, dancing or actively playing with children.
  - vigorous activities include running, biking uphill, or playing sport.



**For extra health benefits, aim for 5 hours of moderate or 2½ hours of vigorous physical activity spread throughout the week**

***Mō te maha ake o ngā huanga hauora, whāia te 5 hāora mō ngā korikori ngāwari noa, 2½ hāora korikori tūkaha rānei, kapi noa i te wiki***

- Increased physical activity has extra health benefits.
- do a brisk walk for 1 hour instead of 30 minutes.
  - change from brisk walking (moderate) to running (vigorous).

	<p><b>Do muscle strengthening activities on at least 2 days each week</b></p> <p><i>Me whakapakari haere i ō ua mō te 2 rā ia wiki, neke atu rānei</i></p>	<p>Muscle strengthening activities help keep your body strong and flexible so you can continue to do everyday activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• do push ups, sit ups or squats.</li> <li>• walk up hills.</li> <li>• go tramping, aqua jogging or to the gym to do weights.</li> <li>• try waka ama, oe vaka or kayaking.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Doing some physical activity is better than doing none</b></p> <p><i>Ahakoā he iti noa iho tō mahi korikori, he pai ake i te kore noa iho</i></p>	<p>Doing any physical activity is good for your health – even if you do less than the recommended amount.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• take the stairs rather than the lift.</li> <li>• get off the bus early and walk or park further away.</li> <li>• cycle or walk from place to place.</li> <li>• do the housework.</li> </ul>

Ministry of Health (2015) “Healthy Eating, Active Living”

## Activities recommended for wellness

The Ministry of Health recommend walking more and sitting less. They suggest you should aim for 150 minutes of moderate or 75 minutes of vigorous activity every week.

**Find an activity you can do with whānau or friends for a fun way to be more active.**

**Kimihia he mahi korikori e āhei ana koe ki te whai i te taha o te whānau, ētahi hoa rānei, hei whakapārekareka ake i te mahi korikori.**



Choosing an activity that you enjoy means you're likely to do it more often.

Ki te whai koe i tētahi mahi korikori pai ki a koe, kāre e kore ka nui ake ngā wā ka whāia e koe.

*Cancer Society Auckland pilates class.*

My weekly activity timetable		
<b>Monday</b>	am	pm
<b>Tuesday</b>	am	pm
<b>Wednesday</b>	am	pm
<b>Thursday</b>	am	pm
<b>Friday</b>	am	pm
<b>Saturday</b>	am	pm
<b>Sunday</b>	am	pm

# More information

## **Cancer Council Australia**

- <https://www.cancer.org.au/about-cancer/living-with-cancer/exercise-for-people-living-with-cancer.html>

## **Cancer Council Victoria**

- <https://www.cancervic.org.au/living-with-cancer/nutrition/nutrition-and-exercise-webinars>

## **MacMillan UK**

- <http://be.macmillan.org.uk/Downloads/CancerInformation/LivingWithAndAfterCancer/MAC12515E05physical-activitylowresPDF20190128HS.PDF>
- <https://www.macmillan.org.uk/information-and-support/coping/maintaining-a-healthy-lifestyle/keeping-active/benefits-of-being-active.html#96481>
- Visit the Health Navigator NZ app library  
<https://www.healthnavigator.org.nz/apps/a/app-library-search/>
- VicHealth Healthy Living apps guide <https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/media-and-resources/vichealth-apps/healthy-living-apps?q=&category=healthy%20eating>

## **OL@-OR@ health app for Māori and Pasifika: To download the app**

- If you have an **Android** phone go to: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=nz.co.uniservices.olaora>
- If you have an **iPhone** go to: <https://itunes.apple.com/nz/app/ol-or/id1278777039?mt=8>
- Visit [sportnz.org.nz](http://sportnz.org.nz) to find a sport or leisure activity in your local area that suits you—from biking to waka ama.

# Cancer Society information and support services

The Cancer Information Helpline is a Cancer Society phone line where you can talk about your concerns and needs with trained health professionals. Phone the Cancer Information Helpline **0800 CANCER (226 237)**.

Your local Cancer Society offers a range of services for people with cancer and their families/whānau. These may include:

- information and support
- volunteer drivers providing transport to treatment
- accommodation while you are having treatment away from home.

The range of services offered differs in each region, contact your local Cancer Society to find out what is available in your area.



## Auckland/Northland

Domain Lodge  
1 Boyle Crescent  
Grafton  
**Auckland**  
09 308 0160

---

Daffodil House  
73 Kamo Road  
Kensington  
**Whangarei**  
09 437 5593

---

[information@akcansoc.org.nz](mailto:information@akcansoc.org.nz)  
[Northland@akcansoc.org.nz](mailto:Northland@akcansoc.org.nz)

---

## Central Districts

Young House (District office)  
127 Ruahine Street  
**Palmerston North**  
06 356 5355

---

3 Koromiko Road  
**Whanganui**  
06 348 7402

---

TSB Cancer Support Centre  
71 Lorna Street  
Westown  
**New Plymouth**  
06 7573006

---

Morris Adair Building  
Gisborne Hospital  
**Gisborne**  
06 867 1795

---

310 Orchard Road  
**Hastings**  
06 8767638

---

Addis House  
135 Ruahine Street  
**Palmerston North**  
06 356355

---

## Waikato/Bay of Plenty

**Divisional Office (Hamilton)**  
511 Grey Street  
**Hamilton**  
07 838 2027 or 0800 22 77 44  
[admin@cancersociety.org.nz](mailto:admin@cancersociety.org.nz)

---

1235 Ranolf Street  
**Rotorua**  
07 349 4556 or 0800 22 77 44  
[rotorua@cancersociety.org.nz](mailto:rotorua@cancersociety.org.nz)

---

111 Cameron Road  
**Tauranga**  
07 571 2035 or 0800 22 77 44  
[tauranga@cancersociety.org.nz](mailto:tauranga@cancersociety.org.nz)

---

## Wellington

52-62 Riddiford Street  
**Wellington**  
04 389 8421

---

27 Kāpiti Road  
**Paraparaumu**  
04 298 8514

---

37 Te Ore Ore Road  
**Masterton**  
06 378 8039

---

102 Hardy Street  
**Nelson**  
03 539 1137

---

The Forum Building  
Market Street  
**Blenheim**  
03 579 4379

---

[info@cancersoc.org.nz](mailto:info@cancersoc.org.nz)

---

## Canterbury-West Coast

97 Fitzgerald Avenue  
**Christchurch**  
03 379 5835

---

98 High Street  
**Greymouth**  
03 768 9557

---

32 Memorial Avenue  
**Timaru**  
03 688 0124

---

6B Kidman Street  
**Rolleston**  
03 925 9708

---

122 Kermode Street  
**Ashburton**  
03 307 7691

---

[contact@cancercwc.org.nz](mailto:contact@cancercwc.org.nz)  
[info@cancercwc.org.nz](mailto:info@cancercwc.org.nz)

---

## Otago and Southland

283 Great King Street  
**Dunedin**  
(03) 477 7447  
[SupportiveCare@cansoc.org.nz](mailto:SupportiveCare@cansoc.org.nz)

---

Waitaki District Community House  
100 Thames Street  
**Oamaru**  
(03) 434 3284 or 027 674 4200

---

Arcade 84  
5/37 Clyde Street  
**Balclutha**  
(03) 418 3916 or 027 277 7632

---

Alexandra Community House Office  
14-20 Centennial Avenue  
**Alexandra**  
(03) 440 0754 or 027 580 0640

---

Wanaka Community House  
40 McDougall Street  
**Wanaka**

---

112B Aurum House  
1092 Frankton Road  
**Queenstown**  
(03) 442 4281 or 027 536 0066

---

**Southland**  
149 Spey Street  
**Invercargill**  
(03) 218 4108

---

## National Office

39 The Terrace  
**WELLINGTON**  
04 494 7270  
[admin@cancer.org.nz](mailto:admin@cancer.org.nz)

---

# Acknowledgements

**Dr Chris Jackson** - Oncologist and Cancer Society Media Director

**Dr Kate Clarke** - Oncologist CCDHB

**Robyn Bayly** - Physiotherapist PhysioNZ

**Campbell Clark** - Sport Wellington

**Sophie Carty** - Health Promotion Manager Otago/Southland Cancer Society

**Angie Cairncross, Julie Holt, Rozena Wedge and Kate Velenski**  
– Cancer Society of New Zealand editorial team

A big thank you to our volunteers who reviewed this resource and shared their experience, time and knowledge of cancer and its treatment with us.

Thank you for the support received from A H Watson Charitable Trust administered by Perpetual Guardian.

Copyright © 2020 Cancer Society of New Zealand Inc —

Te Kāhui Matepukupuku o Aotearoa. PO Box 651, Wellington 6140

ISBN 978-0-9951284-4-6 (print)

ISBN 978-0-9951284-5-3 (on-line)



[www.cancernz.org.nz](http://www.cancernz.org.nz)

ANY CANCER, ANY QUESTION  
0800 CANCER (226 237)  
Cancer Information Helpline



PI 142

