

Exercising for wellness

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Carol Michaels is a fitness industry leader

Staying active when you are living with cancer can be a challenge. Fortunately, healthy physical activity does not have to be intense and strenuous. To help us dive into this topic, this week's guest blogger is Carol Michaels, a cancer exercise specialist with more than 18 years of experience as a certified fitness trainer, and founder of Recovery Fitness. Visit her blog [here](#).

Studies have shown that physically active cancer survivors have a lower risk of cancer recurrences and improved survival compared with those who are inactive. But how exactly do you begin [exercising](#)?

What often gets in the way between survivors knowing they "should" exercise and actually doing it is an incorrect assumption. I have observed that many people assume that exercise has to be intense and high impact (e.g. running). An effective [exercise program for cancer survivors](#), however, will start gently with slow progression. A good exercise program should take into account:

- What exercises you already do
- Your limits
- What you can do now
- Your interest and needs



Participants enjoying a yoga class at Gilda's Club Chicago



Participants enjoying an exercise program at CSC Greater Philadelphia

Starting an exercise program is difficult, but so rewarding. All types of moderate exercise are beneficial. Think about the activities or sports that you enjoy and do them. Do you like to walk, ride a bicycle or dance? If so, you can build your exercise program around the activity you find enjoyable.

How can you [stick with your exercise program](#)? It is a good idea to set goals. Some people derive great satisfaction in setting and then achieving goals. This can be done with charts and graphs charts to

record your progress and reward achievements. Cancer survivors can show tremendous progress when participating in a consistent well-designed exercise program. You should keep in mind that just like everyone else, you will have good and bad days, so you should be able to adapt. Keep as active as possible, be safe and have fun.

Be sure to consult with your health care team before beginning any exercise program.