



# LIVING BEYOND BREAST CANCER®

PHYSICAL CONCERNS



## Exercise

Being active during and after treatment can help you stay healthy and feel better. Feeling tired and sick make it hard to stay active many days, but exercising when you can is good for you and your recovery.

### **SPEAK WITH YOUR DOCTOR**

Before doing any physical activity, check with your doctor. If you are recovering from surgery, you may need time to heal. When you are getting radiation you will be told to stay out of swimming pools. Your doctors will tell you when it is OK to do an activity and which ones you should avoid.

Your doctor may ask a physical therapist to show you exercises with your treatment and limits in mind.

### **GETTING ACTIVE**

There are many ways to be active, some that look like exercise, some that do not. Work out as much as you are comfortable with. Some days you will be more tired than others. But over time, you may find you have more energy for exercise and other activities.

### **HOW TO GET ACTIVE**

Focus on these three types of activity to build health:

- **Heart-healthy activities** are the best for your health. These are activities that make your heart beat faster for a period of time, such as brisk walking, workouts on an elliptical or swimming. Go as long as you feel comfortable, just a few minutes or a half hour if you can.
- **Strength training**, like lifting light weights (under 5 pounds) or household items lighter than a gallon of milk, builds muscle. Exercises where you support your own weight, like push-ups, also help.
- **Stretching** helps you keep a full range of motion. Yoga is a good way to stretch and many yoga studios offer lessons designed for women who have or had breast cancer. You can also do light stretches like reaching over your head or towards your toes.