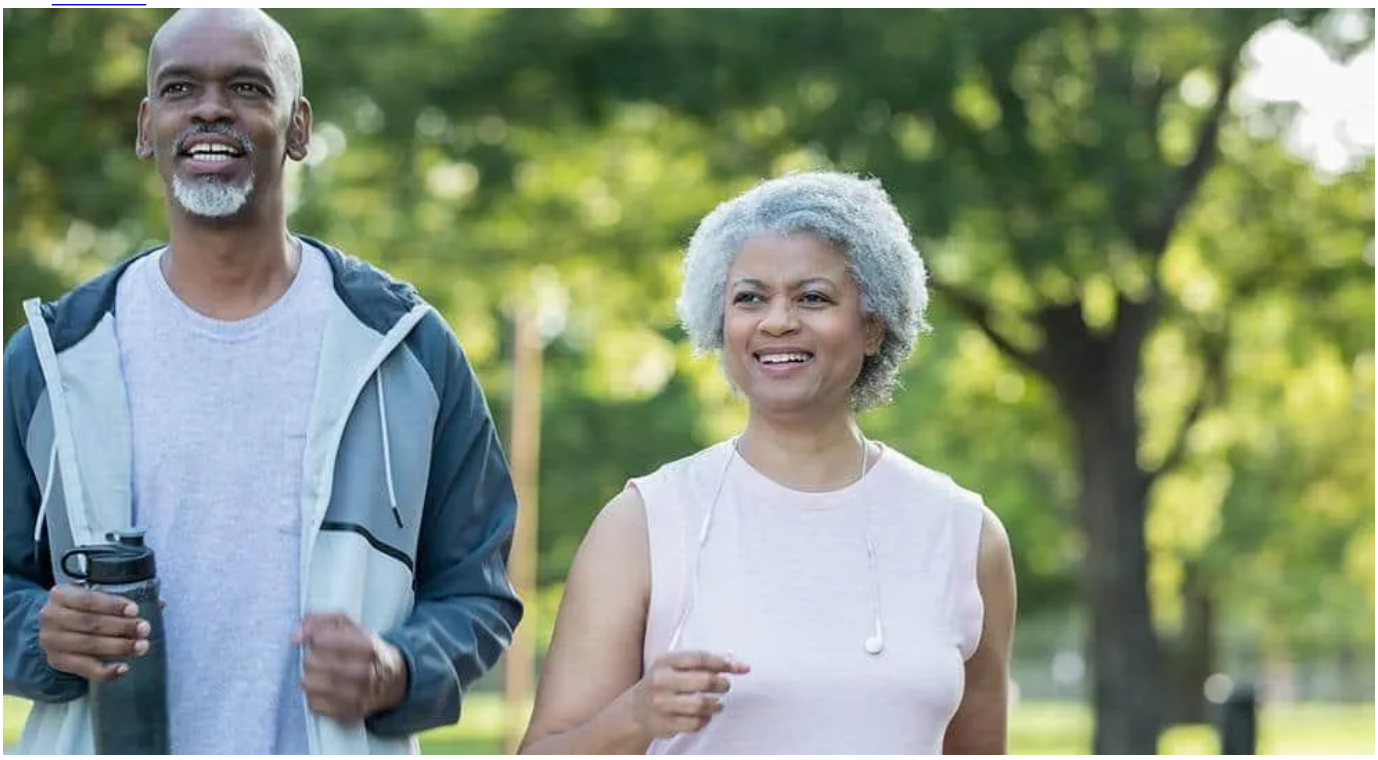
Article Series Staying Active

Forming healthy habits

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Consider the small decisions that become a part of your overall lifestyle.

Focus on starting good habits

A habit is anything you do regularly enough that it becomes second nature. That means you do it almost without thinking. Generally, everyone has some good and bad habits.

Start by thinking about your day-to-day activities. Throughout the day, you make many decisions—things like what you eat, where you go and what you do. When you have cancer, many things in your life are beyond your control. But you can work with your healthcare team to come up with ways to manage things like your diet, exercise and hobbies.

Start small and build from there

For your first new habit, work with your healthcare team to pick something small and measurable. It should be something you know you can accomplish once. Then challenge yourself to do it regularly.

Here are a few examples you could try:

- Taking a short walk, including breaks as needed
- Expanding your diet to include more whole grains, fruits and vegetables
- Starting a hobby that makes you happy

Your healthcare team may have other ideas about what your first new habit can be. Talk with them to learn which small changes would be best for you.

Keep walking enjoyable with these ideas

One example of a new habit could be adding regular walks to your routine. Here are a few ideas to help you form this habit and make it enjoyable.

1. **Bring a buddy**
   Whether it’s a friend, family member, or neighbor, having a partner on your walks may keep things fresh.
2. **Plan for the weather**
   Before you head out, check the local weather. In the summer, it may help to walk in the morning or evening to avoid the hottest part of the day.
3. **Choose comfortable clothes**
   Make sure the shoes and clothing you pick are comfy and appropriate for the weather.
4. **Drink water**
   Remember to stay hydrated. It may help to take a water bottle with you.

5. **Take it easy**
   Plan a distance that’s right for you. It could be a short walk around your block. Or you could drive to a nearby park for a change of scenery.

Track your progress and reward yourself

Use a calendar to track your progress for 4 weeks. Think of a way to reward yourself at the end of these first 4 weeks. Is there somewhere you’ve been wanting to go? Something you’ve been hoping to try? This will give you something to look forward to. And it can help you stay focused on your new daily habit.

Your healthy habit 4-week challenge

Try to stick to your habit for 4 weeks. Think about how your new habit is affecting your mood and energy. If you miss a day, pick it up when you can. Just keep doing your best.

The health information provided here is for educational purposes only and is not intended to replace discussions with a healthcare provider. All decisions regarding patient care must be made with a healthcare provider, considering the unique characteristics of the patient. This information is intended only for residents of the United States.