

[IMAGE]

Make Lemonade

By Editorial Staff

When you're stuck with a lemon, make lemonade. In this case, the lemon is a major one: breast cancer, the most common cancer affecting women. In fact, it's so common that a shocking one in eight women will receive a breast cancer diagnosis in their lifetime. That not only makes prevention absolutely critical; but also ensuring treatment goes smoothly if cancer strikes.

Exercise is the preventer, reducing breast cancer risk (and the risk of various other cancer types) in numerous studies. Exercise is also an important component of cancer care; specifically for dealing with the side effects of treatment. Let's review important findings from a new study on this topic.

Radiation therapy is used to kill cancer cells, but the side effects can be severe, particularly extreme fatigue. Researchers have found that an exercise program can make radiotherapy more tolerable. One group of breast cancer patients completed a 12-week home exercise program, while a second group did not participate in the program and served as a control group for comparison. The weekly exercise program consisted of 1-2 resistance training sessions and 30-40 total minutes of aerobic exercise. All women had been diagnosed with stage I-III breast cancer.

cancer patient - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark Patients in the exercise intervention recovered from cancer-related fatigue quicker than patients in the control group, both during and following radiation therapy. Patients who exercised also reported significantly increases in health-related quality of life (physical well-being, social/family well-being, emotional well-being and functional well-being) following radiotherapy compared to controls. The researchers report on their findings in the aptly named peer-reviewed journal *Breast Cancer*.

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