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# Prostate Cancer and Exercise

Why, how and is it worth the effort?

Prostate Cancer Support Group  
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# Questions for tonight

- What is exercise?
- Does exercise prevent prostate cancer?
- Does exercise cure prostate cancer?
- What sort of exercise is best?
- When is exercise effective?
- What else is exercise good for?
- What are the risks?
- What about motivation or lack of it?

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# What is exercise?

- Exercise is any physical movement or activity which raises the basic metabolic level from resting state.
- Exercise (a.k.a. physical activity) can be
  - occupational or work related
  - leisure time physical activity/exercise/sport

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# Forms of exercise

- Exercise can be classified as
  - Aerobic training
  - Strength training
  - Balance training
  - Flexibility training
  - Power training
  - Speed training
  - Agility and coordination training
  - Endurance training

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# Does exercise prevent prostate cancer?

- No – but it does reduce the risk of prostate cancer. It also reduces the risk of many other lifestyle related diseases.
  - Evidence - A US study tracked the health of 47,620 men over 14 years. Men over 65 in the “vigorous” exercise group had a 70% lower risk for prostate cancer than the “sedentary” group and if they did have cancer, has a slower rate of progression.

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# Does exercise cure prostate cancer?

- No – but it does help to manage the disease and slow its progression.
  - Evidence – Numerous studies have demonstrated that the disease is slowed and general quality of life is improved if regular exercise is engaged in

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# What sort of exercise is best?

## Aerobic exercise a.k.a. cardio exercise

Any movement that uses large muscle groups, is continuous and rhythmical that increase heart rate and breathing rate. Ie “systemic” exercise that stimulates blood flow to all organs

## Strength Training

Using specific muscle groups against a resistance to “overload” that muscle group. Ie only stimulates the muscle group being worked.

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# When is exercise effective?

- When it is a life long practice
  - When it is engaged in most days of the week
  - When you enjoy it
  - When it is a mix of aerobic exercise and strength training
  - When it meets the recommendations on physical activity for health for older Australians ([www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au))
    - 30 min “moderate” activity per day or 10,000 steps per day
    - Think of movement as an opportunity, not an inconvenience
    - When it also includes some more vigorous exercise
  - When there is gradual progression
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# What else is exercise good for?

## *Reduces risk of chronic/life-threatening disease*

- ❑ Reduces risk of cardio vascular disease ie heart disease and stroke – helps to regulate blood pressure and blood lipids
  - ❑ Reduces risk of Type II Diabetes – helps maintain healthy body weight and regulate blood sugars
  - ❑ Reduces the effects of osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis - maintains joint function and joint muscle support
  - ❑ Retards the onset and development of osteoporosis – maintains bone mineral content
  - ❑ Reduces risk of certain cancers – particularly breast and colon cancer – helps maintain healthy body weight; strengthens immune systems
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# What else is exercise good for?

- *Improves quality of life*

- ❑ Reduces risk of falls and fractures – maintains strength and balance and bone density
- ❑ Delays the onset of dementia – improves cognitive function – maintains cerebral blood flow and neuro-transmitters
- ❑ Improves mood - reduces the incidence of depression – release of endorphins and opportunities for social contact
- ❑ Improves functional capacity – “Activities of Daily Living”
- ❑ Reduces the need for medication – (> 4 medications increases the risk of falls. Saves money.)
- ❑ Improves sleep
- ❑ Improves energy levels
- ❑ Strengthens immune systems

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# What are the risks?

- It is more dangerous NOT to exercise than to exercise

Caution is needed if you

- Have been totally sedentary for a long time
- If you are sick
- If you have diagnosed heart conditions, diabetes, pulmonary disease, osteoporosis, joint replacements or recent surgery

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# What about motivation?

- Learn the facts – stay informed
- Find support eg a group, a friend to exercise with
- Find an activity you enjoy and an enjoyable place/ environment
- Develop a routine
- Analyse your “barriers” and “triggers”
- Monitor the results
- Set some goals as you progress