

Physical Therapy & Breast Cancer

How physical therapy can help you!

Why Choose Physical Therapy?

While there is no known way to prevent breast cancer, lifestyle changes can reduce the risk of developing it. Physical therapists can help you with these lifestyle changes to lower the risk of development, or help manage symptoms before, during, and after cancer treatment. Physical therapists are able to help you decrease pain and discomfort while increasing your quality of life, so you can continue to do the things you love.

Role of Physical Therapy Treatments

Pain Reduction

Physical therapists use a variety of strategies including massage, exercises and other treatment options to reduce cancer or surgically related pain.

Scar Tissue Treatment

Physical therapists can reduce restrictive scar tissue using massage and other techniques.

Lymphedema Treatment

Physical therapists can fit compression garments and provide lymphatic drainage through a variety of techniques.

Mobility and Strength

Physical therapists can help to increase your mobility and strength following surgery through specific manual techniques as well as exercise programs and patient education on topics such as safe return to activity, postural correction, and relaxation techniques.

Fatigue

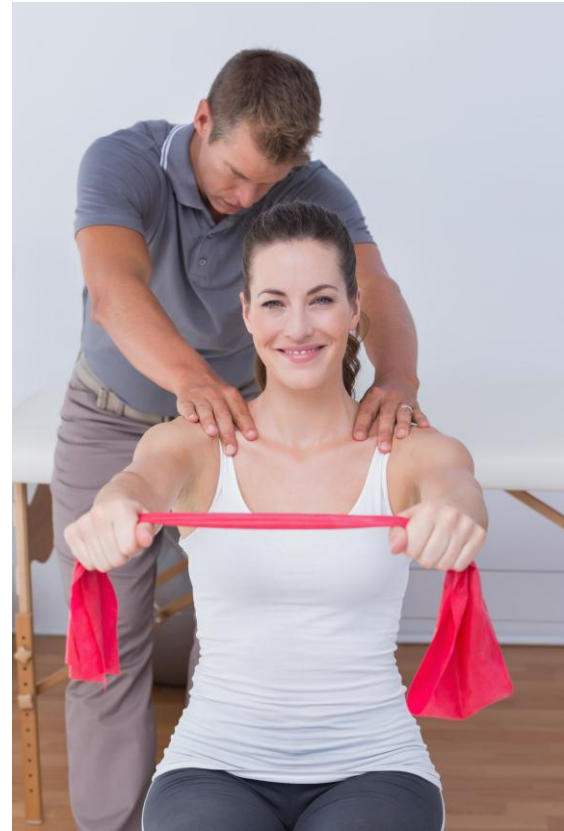
Physical therapists can help with cancer related fatigue by guiding you to safely increase activity levels, helping you address specific goals, decreasing pain levels and improving activities of daily living.

Chemo Induced Neuropathy

Through specific exercises, physical therapists help decrease functional mobility problems that may be occurring secondary to cancer treatments. Along with helping to reduce pain, they can also assist you with skin and foot care.

Return to Work Planning

A physical therapist may assist you in planning your return to work and other activities.



Self-Care

Pain Management Strategies

- Keep shoulders mobile by performing gentle stretches.
- Don't be afraid to talk to your healthcare provider if your pain medication becomes ineffective

Strategies to Reduce the Risk of Lymphedema

- Use a pH balanced skin moisturizer, keep your nails and cuticles extra clean, and apply antibiotic cream to any cuts.
- If you need to have an injection, blood work, or blood pressure reading, inform your health care provider that you are at risk for lymphedema.
- Do deep breathing and moderate exercise, ideally every day to help get your lymph flowing.



In Partnership With:

Students from the School of Physical Therapy have created this document in partnership with the Saskatchewan Physical Therapy Association and Saskatchewan Breast Cancer Connect.



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