

Training Clients with Cancer

Cancer is the No. 2 cause of death in the United States, but physical activity before, during and after a cancer diagnosis has been linked to better health outcomes.

Considerations

There are (as of yet) no specific exercise guidelines for different cancer types. If your client also has a physical disability, follow the guidelines for that disability. If at all possible, avoid lapses in physical activity after cancer treatments.



Cancer Risk Factors

Noncontrollable

- Gene mutations
- Hormone imbalance
- Family history
- Age

Controllable

- Smoking/tobacco use
- Diet/obesity
- Alcohol consumption
- Sun/UV exposure
- Radiation exposure
- Carcinogen exposure
- Chronic inflammation
- Immunosuppression
- Physical inactivity



Cancer-Related Disabilities

- Dysfunction of major organs (e.g., lungs, heart, brain, pancreas)
- Sensory dysfunction (e.g., chemo-induced peripheral neuropathy [CIPN])
- Bone and joint damage, as well as osteoporosis
- Amputation (e.g., mastectomy)
- Paralysis (from spinal tumors)



Cancer Treatment Contraindications

Some cancer treatments can cause contraindications relevant to exercise training, including:

- Nausea
- Fatigue
- Immunosuppression
- Sensitivity to stimuli