

Staying Physically Active with Multiple Myeloma



STAYING PHYSICALLY ACTIVE can be challenging for people living with multiple myeloma, but even gentle activity can boost energy, help manage treatment side effects, and improve overall quality of life.

Physical activity is an important part of your overall health

Physical activity is anything that gets you moving. Moving your body can help:

- Strengthen your heart and muscles
- Boost your energy
- Improve your mood and reduce stress
- Help you sleep better
- Support memory and concentration
- Reduce pain and inflammation
- Prevent or manage chronic health conditions

Physical activity can help with myeloma and treatment side effects

Some myeloma symptoms and treatment side effects can make it harder to be active. But research shows that physical activity can ease many symptoms and support your well-being during treatment.

Benefits of being active include:

- Reduced fatigue
- Reduced bone pain
- Reduced numbness, tingling or pain (neuropathy) in the hands and feet
- Improved mood, including less depression and anxiety

Staying active can also strengthen your immune system, helping your body fight infections and reducing the need for blood transfusions.



Fighting fatigue?

Exercise is the only non-drug approach proven to reduce cancer-related fatigue. Even small amounts of gentle activity can help you feel more energized over time.



Simple ways to start moving

- **Talk with your care team before starting any kind of exercise.** Ask about any physical limitations you may have
- **Start slow and increase activity over time.** Even a few minutes a day can help
- **Be active when you feel up to it,** and rest when you need to
- **Keep safety in mind.** Stop activity if you feel pain or dizziness
- **Set simple, practical goals,** like walking to the mailbox without stopping
- **Be consistent.** Small steps add up over time

Remember, physical activity isn't just formal workouts — everyday movements like gardening or cleaning count, too.

There are many ways to be active

Activity	Benefit	Examples
Aerobic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Strengthens the heart and lungs▪ Boosts energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Gentle walking▪ Slow cycling on a stationary bike▪ Swimming or water aerobics
Strength and Resistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Strengthens muscles▪ Supports bone health	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Lifting hand weights▪ Using resistance bands▪ Leg lifts and sit-to-stand exercises from a sturdy chair
Flexibility and balance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Helps you stay mobile	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Stretching▪ Yoga (can also help with treatment-related nausea)▪ Qigong and tai chi (can also help reduce anxiety)

Safe ways to stay active with myeloma

Staying safe while being active is important, especially during treatment or if you have bone or nerve symptoms. Ask your doctor about a referral to a physical therapist who can help you create a personalized exercise plan.

Safety tips:

- **Limit activities that increase your risk of falling**, such as walking on uneven ground
- **Avoid contact sports, lifting heavy weights, sudden or twisting movements, or “weight-bearing” activities**, like push-ups. Your bones may fracture more easily, so extra stress can be risky
- **Drink plenty of fluids, unless your care team says otherwise.** Some treatments increase your risk of becoming dehydrated
- **Avoid public gyms or swimming pools** if you're at a higher risk of infection
- **Bring someone with you** or let someone know where you'll be in case you need help



Let your care team know if you have new or worsening pain, dizziness, or take longer than usual to recover after being active.



Physical activity and bone disease

Many myeloma patients have bone disease, and more than half have bone pain. It's natural to worry that exercise might make things worse. When done safely, exercise can actually help your bones and overall comfort by:

- Strengthening muscles that support and protect your bones
- Improving balance and lower your risk of falls and fractures
- Reducing bone pain
- Slowing bone loss over time

Water-based exercises, such as swimming or water walking, can be especially helpful because they reduce pressure on your body.

Talk with your care team about which activities are safe for you.



Have additional questions about physical activity or resources?

The MMRF Patient Navigation Center is available to answer your questions and provide additional support. Give us a call at 1-888-841-6673, Monday-Friday, 9AM-7PM ET, or visit us online at themmr.org/support/patient-navigation-center/