



## Keeping active



When you have blood cancer, moving your body and strengthening your muscles can help you cope. It can help you prepare for and cope with treatment, recover better and live well with blood cancer.

## Why being active matters

If you don't need treatment straight away, your doctor may encourage you to improve your fitness. This can be while you're on active monitoring or in the lead-up to treatment. It is called prehabilitation or 'prehab'.

**Prehab is important because it may improve your treatment outcomes.**

During treatment, keeping active can help your body to be strong and to work well. Even after intensive treatment, like a stem cell transplant, try to return to activity as soon as you can.



Being active can bring you many other benefits, including:

- Improved emotional and physical health
- Better sleep
- Better long-term health

## How active should you be?

It depends on how well you feel and what's happening with your blood cancer. If you generally feel fit and well:



- Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate activity per week or at least 75 minutes of vigorous activity per week. Or a combination of the two.
- A couple of days a week, do some strength training to keep your muscles, bones and joints strong.

If you're over 65, try to add in activities that improve your balance two days a week, like dancing, bowls, yoga or Tai Chi. These aim to help you move smoothly and confidently, and to prevent falls.

**If you're unable to do the recommended amount of activity, be kind to yourself. Some movement is better than none. Even 5 minutes of movement a few times a day is better than no movement at all.**



You don't have to go to a gym or attend an exercise class to be active. Walking, gardening, housework and yoga all count. Choose activities that you enjoy and that restore your energy. Start at a manageable level and increase gradually.

If you're feeling unwell or frail, be guided by how you feel. Try to break up periods of sitting or lying down with movement. Bed-based stretches and sitting exercises all help.

Remember to take regular breaks when needed and to keep hydrated. Most people need to drink six to eight cups of water or other fluids a day.

## Challenges to keeping active

Your symptoms or side effects of treatment can make it harder to be active. Common problems include fatigue and low blood counts. Focus on what you can do and do it regularly.

Whatever challenges you have to keeping active, we have **tips to help you**. Visit [leukaemiacare.org.uk](https://leukaemiacare.org.uk) and search for 'Keeping active' or scan the QR code.



## Need support or information?

- Scan the QR code or visit [leukaemiacare.org.uk](https://leukaemiacare.org.uk)
- Call our freephone helpline on **08088 010 444**
- Send a WhatsApp to **07500 068065**
- Email [support@leukaemiacare.org.uk](mailto:support@leukaemiacare.org.uk)



This information is aimed at people in the UK. We do our best to make sure it is accurate and up to date but it should not replace advice or guidance from your health professional. If you have any feedback or you'd like a list of our sources, please email [information@leukaemiacare.org.uk](mailto:information@leukaemiacare.org.uk).

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