

Exercise intervention, physiological function and survivorship following Lymphoma treatment.

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Brief Background

Cancer patients invariably suffer from the direct effects of adjuvant toxicity and indirect sedentary induced deconditioning, which significantly impairs cardiovascular function. Chronic inactivity also contributes to the development of debilitating systemic fatigue, impaired musculo-skeletal function, metabolic disorders and depression. Indeed, many cancer survivors ultimately succumb to heart disease.

A substantial body of literature supports the benefits and efficacy of sustained exercise interventions during and following adjuvant therapy in cancer patients. Overwhelming evidence also demonstrates that carefully structured on-going exercise significantly improves physiological function and quality of life that would otherwise diminish in the absence of regular exercise.

Most of the “cancer and exercise” literature encompasses patients suffering/surviving breast and colorectal cancers. Whilst the effects of exercise interventions are limited within the cohort of lymphoma patients, a landmark North American study by Courneya et al (2009) demonstrated impressive physical capacity improvement and patient rated life-quality outcomes following a supervised 12-week aerobic exercise intervention in lymphoma patients. To our knowledge, similar studies or practical exercise and wellness programs targeting post-treatment lymphoma patients is not well established in Australia. Anecdotal evidence also suggests that there is currently no follow-up “survivorship” exercise intervention or physiological monitoring programs available for lymphoma patients following targeted treatment in Australia.

Jump Start Program Aims

Investigate the effects of a carefully prescribed 12-week exercise intervention programs for lymphoma patients in order to; (a) improve cardiovascular function; (b) reduce body fat composition/increase lean muscle tissue; (c) attenuate symptoms of systemic fatigue; (d) reduce the risk of metabolic syndrome and other chronic disorders; (e) improve mood status and quality of life.

The pilot project outcomes will aim to provide evidence of specific physical activity effectiveness.