

PATIENT INFORMATION

Prehabilitation for Lung Cancer Treatment

You have been given this leaflet by your Clinical Nurse Specialist because you have been told you have, or may have, cancer.

This leaflet has been developed to provide information and support on how you can prepare for treatment, helping you to take control and be involved in your care. The lung cancer specialist nursing team along with your Consultant or Surgeon can help you prepare yourself for treatment or surgery.

If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the Lung Cancer Nurses (Debbie, Kerenza, Jenny & Louise) on 01803 655069 and leave a message.

What is Prehabilitation?

Prehabilitation prepares you physically and emotionally for cancer treatments through exercise, nutrition, emotional support, and lifestyle changes. Even small adjustments can significantly impact your treatment response and recovery, with benefits noticeable in as little as two weeks. Research shows prehabilitation can lead to shorter hospital stays, fewer admissions and reduced surgical complications with the added benefits of improved overall fitness, energy, and improved sleep. Prehabilitation promotes independence in daily activities, improves mood and reduces anxiety promoting a sense of control.

What does prehabilitation involve?

Prehabilitation involves moving more and being as active as possible, stopping smoking or significantly cutting down, cutting out alcohol or minimising your intake. Eating a well-balanced healthy diet and keeping hydrated by drinking enough fluids, especially water. Using psychological strategies to help manage low mood and worries.

Moving More and Being Active

Staying active is crucial for maintaining heart and lung strength, especially during surgical or drug-based treatment and recovery. Activities that make you slightly out of breath are beneficial. Regular movement prevents muscle loss and improves strength and balance. Simple activities like walking, stair climbing, housework, gardening, or swimming can help. We may suggest referring you to a fitness instructor experienced with respiratory conditions for a personalised exercise program.

Stopping Smoking

Quitting smoking is the healthiest choice you can make with many health benefits. Evidence shows that stopping smoking in lung cancer patients can enhance treatment effectiveness, reduce complications, and speed recovery after surgery. While it can be challenging many resources are available to assist you. You are more likely to succeed with support from a stop smoking service and using nicotine replacement therapies.

Reducing alcohol intake

Cutting down on alcohol can benefit your health. In the short term, drinking less alcohol can improve the quality of your sleep and help you feel better with more energy and improved wellbeing.

Nutritional Support

Good nutrition before, during, and after surgery or treatment helps maintain a healthy weight, retain muscle, and reduce the risk of complications. A balanced diet can improve healing and speed recovery. There is no need for a special diet, eat a normal, well-balanced diet. If you are concerned about your weight or nutrition, please ask the Lung Cancer Nurse for advice.

Psychological support

Feeling anxious or scared during investigations or treatment is normal. Your lung cancer nurse can provide support and answer any questions you may have. The Lodge Cancer Support Centre (01803 656490) can offer emotional support and provide resources. Your GP can also connect you with community services for additional support.

Resources you may find helpful:

The My Sunrise Cancer Companion App has more information on investigations and treatment for cancer including prehabilitation. Download the QR code or Android or iPhone for more information.



Google Play
for Android



Download on
the App store

Move More and Being Active

www.macmillan.org.uk move more guide

Nutritional Support

www.Macmillan.org.uk Healthy eating guide

www.Macmillan.org.uk Building – Up Diet

Stopping Smoking

Torbay Residents: www.yourhealthtorquay.co.uk

or call 0300 456 1006

Devon Residents: www.stopforlifedevon.org

or call 0800 122 3866

Reducing alcohol intake

Drinkline 0300 123 1110

For further assistance or to receive this information in a different format, please contact the department which created this leaflet.