

## **Extract from *Prostate Cancer and Hormone Therapy - 4 ways to improve your life.* (by Prof Bertrand Tombal, published by Hospira)**

### **What is the level of your physical activity?**

Your level of activity can be assessed with this simple questionnaire.

#### **You are VERY PHYSICALLY ACTIVE**

- If you spend at least 30 minutes each day in an intensive activity such as carrying heavy weight, digging the soil or working intensively in the garden, mountain biking or cycling, running or playing or other sports.
- If you walk at least one hour a day or spend at least one hour in moderate activity such as carrying light weights, vacuuming, gentle cycling or playing volleyball.

#### **Recommendation**

Your level of physical exercise is optimal to keep the side effects of hormone therapy to a minimum. However, if you would like to increase your activity, make sure that you set your goals according to your level of energy. Do not get discouraged, take your time and adapt.

#### **Your physical activity is AVERAGE**

- If you spend at least 20 minutes in an intensive activity (see above) at least 3 days a week.
- If you walk at least 30 minutes 5 days a week and practice moderate physical activity (see above).

#### **Recommendation**

Your level of physical activity is almost right to minimise the side effects of hormone therapy. First, ensure that you maintain this level of activity. Then gradually try to increase it to reach the goal of walking at least 30 minutes a day or moderately exercising 3 to 4 times a week for 30 minutes. Again, do not get discouraged; take your time to adapt.

#### **You lead a SEDENTARY LIFE**

- If you do not fall under the former two categories.

#### **Recommendation**

You are not physically active enough to effectively combat the side effects of hormone therapy. But it is not too late to start exercising. It is a matter of organisation, goals and willpower. The goal is simple: succeeding to walk 30 minutes a day or to moderately exercise for 30 minutes 3 to 4 times a week. Be patient and do not get discouraged: you may need some time to reach this level of activity.

If you are motivated, then certainly do not limit yourself. The benefits of intense physical activity, especially for the health of your heart and on sugar metabolism, are well known.

## **Tips to help you start and stick with an exercise program**

It is important to prepare yourself before starting physical activity, especially if you have a sedentary lifestyle, weigh too much, and have never done any physical exertion or have only done it in the distant past.

- Consult your doctor for a full medical examination. Do not start before your doctor has agreed with your decision to start exercising.
- Choose something you like to do. Make sure it suits you physically, for example, swimming is easier on arthritic joints.
- Set yourself realistic goals. Try not to repeat your performance from the past. We are 20 only once.
- Start out slowly. If you've been inactive for years, you can't run a marathon after only 2 weeks of training! Begin with a 10-minute period of light exercise or a brisk walk every day and gradually increase how hard you exercise and for how long.
- Ask a physiotherapist for advice or join a gym.
- Involve your family and friends. Exercising with a friend or relative can make it more fun. Play with your grandchildren and practice their favourite sports with them: cycling, hiking, football, swimming. In that way you will look after your health and also have great times together
- Vary your routine. You may be less likely to get bored or injured if you change your exercise routine. Walk one day. Bicycle the next. Consider activities like dancing and racquet sports, and even chores like vacuuming or mowing the lawn.
- Choose a comfortable time of day. Don't work out too soon after eating or when it's too hot or cold outside. Wait until later in the day if you're too stiff in the morning.
- Don't get discouraged. It can take weeks or months before you notice some of the changes from exercise, such as weight loss.
- Forget "no pain, no gain". While a little soreness is normal after you first start exercising, pain isn't. Take a break if you get hurt or if you are injured.
- Make exercise fun. Read, listen to music or watch while riding a stationary bicycle, for example. Find fun things to do, like taking a walk through the zoo.
- Go dancing. Learn how to play a sport you enjoy, such as tennis.
- Hang a poster visible to everyone. Put a clear sign on it whenever you reach your target. Share your success with your family and friends; they will be proud of you!
- What counts is enjoying sport and gradually building up your condition. It is up to you!

## **Walking: a daily activity that will do you a lot of good!**

Walking for 30 minutes each day guarantees a good physical condition and makes you feel good! It also helps you to combat the side effects of hormone therapy.

- Start by deciding on a simple destination. Walk in your neighbourhood or in a familiar environment. Choose smooth and well maintained footpaths to reduce the risk of falls to a minimum. Choose pleasant walks amongst gardens, flowers and trees. Choose well-lit places especially if you go out walking in the evening. Ask your council whether there are any set walks in the area.
- Wear appropriate, comfortable clothes and good walking shoes.
- Always start to walk slowly and gradually build up speed. Do not walk for more than minutes in the beginning, even if you are not tired. Do not forget that this is about a daily programme. Let

your body get used to the higher level of activity gradually. Try to make your walks longer rather than faster, so that you will ultimately be walking 30 to 60 minutes a day.

- Make sure that your daily walk is the most important event of the day Do not let yourself distracted by anything. Choose a moment that suits you and record your walks in your diary as though it relates to an important appointment.
- Walk as a couple or with friends. What is good for you is certainly also good for others. Involve your closest relatives, your children and grandchildren. What could more satisfying than walking as a family!
- Measure your progress. Wear a pedometer to count how many steps you take each day. Record the amount at the end of the day so that you know whether you reached your personal goal. In that way you can quickly assess whether or not you are progressing.
- Contact your doctor quickly if any of the following symptoms occurs during or after the walk: nausea, fainting, sight disorders, dizziness, shortness of breath.

## **Nine exercises to strengthen your muscles and bones**

Exercises are important to strengthen your muscles and bones. They may also lower the risk of osteoporosis. You can join a gym in your neighbourhood. They provide all the necessary equipment and professional guidance you need. The trainers can draw up a personal programme for you.

If you don't want to join a gym, or are unable to, you can do exercises at home. The following simple programme takes no more than minutes. You only have to invest in some beanbags and small dumbbells of 1 and 2 kg. The dumbbells can also be replaced by half litre plastic bottles filled with sand. Try to do this exercise programme three times a week.

If you are not used to doing these kinds of exercises, do not forget the following advice:

- Physical exercise, at home and at the gym, should not hurt or cause extreme fatigue.
- Listen to your body. DO not try to do too much.
- If you have difficulty carrying out the proposed exercises, consult a physiotherapist. They can recommend appropriate exercises for you.

## **How to perform the exercises**

- First, repeat each movement 8 to 12 times without a dumbbell or with a 1 kg weight. Then repeat each movement 8 to 12 times with a heavier weight (2 kg).
- Wear comfortable clothes and shoes.
- Breathe normally through each exercise. If you do not feel well, reduce the pace. Stop immediately if the pain persists.
- You do not have to do all the exercises at once, take your time.
- Make the exercises more pleasant by playing your favourite music.

### Exercise 1



- Stand straight with your feet together.
- Raise your knee until your upper leg is horizontal.
- Then lower knee so your feet are together again.
- DO the same with your other knee.

### Exercise 2



- Stand straight with your feet together
- Rise onto tiptoes.
- Resume starting position.

### Exercise 3



- Stand straight with your feet together
- Stretch your right leg out backwards
- Do the same with your left leg.

### Exercise 4



- Lie on your back with your legs bent and the soles of your feet flat on the so that your back does not bend.
- Stretch your arms upwards straight over your shoulders.
- Slowly fold your arms until your wrists touch your chest.
- Stretch your arms out again to the starting position.

### Exercise 5



- Stand straight with your feet slightly spread.
- Hold the dumbbells to the side, slightly higher than your shoulders.
- Raise your aims vertically until they are stretched.
- Resume the starting

### Exercise 6



- Sit on a chair.
- Hold your stretched arms out to the side, palms facing upwards.
- Fold your forearms (while holding dumbbells) to your head.
- Slowly return to the initial while stretching your arms completely.

### Exercise 7



- Sit on a chair and keep your back straight while you allow your arms to drop, palms facing forward.
- Fold your arms and slowly bring your arms to your shoulders (while holding the dumbbells)
- Gradually allow your arms to drop again while you keep the movement under control.
- You can also do this with each arm separately.

### Exercise 8



- Lie on your back with your legs bent and your feet flat on the ground.
- Put your arms along your body.
- Breathe out slowly and pull in your tummy.
- Stop breathing and stretch as long as (as when you were measured as a child and you wanted to be just a few centimetres taller).
- Do this exercise without a weight. Repeat 10 times.

### Exercise 9



- Lie on your stomach.
- Pull your head up using your shoulders.
- This movement is even more effective if you do not put your chest completely back on the floor when you lie down again.