

Cancer Care Companion

Thriving at Home During the COVID Outbreak

Issue 103



6 Perks of Being Stuck at Home

Whether you're stuck at home because of health-related concerns or you're isolating due to COVID quarantine measures (or now both!), the emotional impact can be distressing. According to research published in Lancet, separation from loved ones, loss of freedom, uncertainty over disease status, and boredom can have profound negative psychological effects.¹ Researchers found that isolation, fear of infection, frustration, boredom, lack of supplies, inadequate information, financial loss, and stigma were key stressors.

Unfortunately, many of these stressors can't be controlled and some can even lead to life-threatening situations for you and your family. In these cases, you should seek immediate assistance by dialing 911 or calling your family physician to get connected to medical or community support quickly.

For other key stressors, however — namely boredom and frustration — alleviating them is 100% in your control. First, you reframe your mindset. Rather than dwelling on the things you normally love to do that are currently off-limits, focus instead on the positive side of being stuck at home.

Bone Health Exercise Straight-Arm Pulldown

Starting a new exercise practice at home is a great gift to yourself. You have the potential to improve bone health and prevent (or slow) bone loss through repeated exercise.³ This exercise works the muscles and the bones around the shoulder and the back. The only equipment you need is a resistance band or tube, which are widely available for sale online. *(continued on page 2)*

Recipe

Panzanella Salad



This tasty tomato, bread and olive salad is rich in omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids, which help to reduce inflammation, promote brain health and improve healthy cholesterol levels.⁴ Healthy fat also promotes fullness, and including them in your diet may help with weight maintenance. *(Recipe on page 3)*

1. Be 100% yourself

Think of home as your "100% Me" cocoon and, while you're nestled there, don't worry about conforming to anyone else's expectations. You can wear whatever you want, look how you want, say what you want, do what you want, and be 100% yourself. Use this time to lean into whatever brings you comfort and energy without worrying about impressing anyone else.

2. Save your mental energy

No racing from meeting to meeting; no frustrating commutes; no frantic meal preparations. These types of daily expenditures of mental energy accumulate and leave us exhausted. However, when our worlds become more constrained, many of these energy-draining activities disappear, leaving us with more time for relaxation and doing things we love. *(continued on page 2)*

You need to reframe your mindset.

Rather than dwelling on the things you normally love to do that are currently off-limits, focus instead on the positive aspect of what you can do at home.



(continued from page 1)

3. Learn new fitness skills

Have you ever been curious to try a new exercise — perhaps yoga, pilates, line dancing, or even mini-trampoline jumping? — but you weren't sure how to get started or feared being the “new” student? Now, there are a multitude of online fitness classes and shelter-in-place mandates provide a natural opportunity to try one from the privacy of your own home. The best part is that research shows home-based physical activity improves both fitness and psychological well-being for cancer patients.²

4. Eat healthier

Okay, technically, this could just as easily go the opposite way (you eat un-healthier!) if you're not careful, but — at a minimum — you'll likely find your diet naturally improves right now simply because you'll be forced to avoid the daily coffee run and the breakroom snack bar and that slice (or two!) of your co-worker's birthday cake.

5. Spend less money

When you're stuck at home, you don't need to spend as much money on things like gas, bridge tolls, the midday coffee run, or dry cleaning. And when you're not out-and-about, you won't be tempted to buy things just because they are “on sale.”

6. Protect yourself from germs

At home, the only germs you encounter are your own (and those of any family members or roommates who live with you) versus the multitude of germs you'd encounter otherwise. Less germs means less risk of infection, which means less need for medical care or pharmacy expenses and time off work.

Bone Health Exercise

Straight-Arm Pulldown

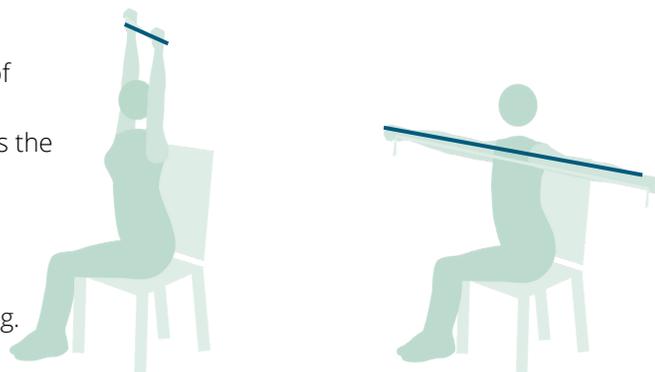
(continued from page 1)

This exercise works the muscles and the bones around the shoulder and the back.

- Begin seated, holding one end of the band or tube in each hand.
- Keeping your arms straight, raise your hands overhead for a count of three.
- Pull the ends of the band taut with arms wide and lower band across the chest to a count of three.
- Complete two sets of 10 repetitions each.
- Keep track of your sets and repetitions.

Modification: If you want more challenge, do this exercise while standing.

Visit www.Thrivors.com for more research-based exercises for cancer survivors.



Recipe

Panzanella Salad

Recipe from Open Arms MN

This beautiful salad provides vitamin D and calcium, which is beneficial for bone health.⁴

Makes 4 Servings



Ingredients

- 3 cups grape or cherry tomatoes, halved
- 3 cups arugula
- 1 red onion, thinly sliced
- 1 cucumber, seeds removed
- 4 slices or 2 cup of bread, torn into chunks (stale or grilled)
- 1/3 cup basil chopped
- 1 cup micro greens
- 1/2 cup kalamata olives, chopped
- 1/2 cup parmesan reggiano, shaved
- 3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1/4 cup parsley leaves, chopped
- Salt and Pepper to taste

Directions

1. Mix all ingredients in a bowl. Cover and let sit at room temperature for at least 30 minutes.
2. Serve at room temperature and garnish with additional micro greens and parsley.

The landscape of survivorship for women with breast cancer (including metastatic) is quickly changing, with considerable improvements in the role of physical activity and nutrition.⁸

Health Benefits for Cancer Survivors

- The combination of tomatoes, arugula, and onions provides many nutrients and antioxidants that can support your body when undergoing cancer treatment or help to prevent further illness if you are recovering.⁵
- A specific antioxidant in tomatoes called lycopene, has been researched for its potential to fight off cancer, specifically prostate cancer.⁶
- One serving of this salad provides 10 grams of protein from the bread and cheese. Protein helps to build muscle and tissues, and it also promotes fullness which is important for weight control.⁷

Tips

- For the bread chunks, use whole-grain bread for more fiber and nutrients.
- Omit bread if you are gluten intolerant



The information in this newsletter is provided as an educational resource. Before undertaking any physical activity or exercise program you should consult with your physician and healthcare team.

References: **1.** Brooks SK, Webster RK, Smith LE, et al. The psychological impact of quarantine and how to reduce it: rapid review of the evidence. 2020. <https://www.thelancet.com>. **2.** Pinto B, Frierson, C, et al. Home-based physical activity intervention for breast cancer patients. J Clin Oncol 23:3577-3587. 2005. American Society of Clinical Oncology. **3.** Winters-Stone KM, Dobek J, Bennett JA, Nail LM, Leo MC, Schwartz A. The effect of resistance training on muscle strength and physical function in older, postmenopausal breast cancer survivors: a randomized controlled trial. J Cancer Surviv. 2012;6(2):189-199. doi:10.1007/s11764-011-0210-x. **4.** NIH. Office of Dietary Supplements. Omega Fact Sheet. 2020. <https://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets>. **5.** van Breemen RB, Pajkovic N. Multitargeted therapy of cancer by lycopene. Cancer Lett. 2008;269(2):339-351. doi:10.1016/j.canlet.2008.05.016. **6.** Wertz K. Lycopene effects contributing to prostate health. Nutr Cancer. 2009;61(6):775-783. doi:10.1080/01635580903285023. **7.** U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. 8th Edition. **8.** Sheehan P, Kabir C, Rao R, Hoskins K, Stolley M. Exploring Diet, Physical Activity, and Quality of Life in Females with Metastatic Breast Cancer: A Pilot Study to Support Future Intervention. J Acad Nutr Diet. 2015;115(10):1690-1698. doi:10.1016/j.jand.2015.03.017.



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