



Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Bae Abertawe
Swansea Bay University
Health Board



MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT

Swansea Bay University Health Board

Gynaecological Oncology Prehabilitation

Patient Information Leaflet



The Gynae-Oncology Prehabilitation (Prehab) Service is a dedicated Physiotherapy Service, working closely with your Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS).

What is Prehabilitation (Prehab)

Prehab will use exercises, lifestyle choices and diet advice to help you to be at your best, before you have surgery or any further treatments. It will help you to be as fit as possible, so that you can get back to being your normal self after treatment.

The aim of prehabilitation is:

- **Personal Empowerment** - It can give you a sense of control and purpose, which is often gets lost after you've had a suspicion of cancer or a diagnosis. It can help you to prepare for your treatments.
- **Physical and Psychological Resilience** – It can help you to be in the best possible shape before you start your treatment. It can also prepare you for what you will go through during the treatment. The sessions can help prepare you both physically and mentally for how you may feel during your treatment. . It can also help you to recover quicker from your treatments.
- **Long-term Health** – It can help you to make long-term healthy lifestyle changes, which will have a number of long-term benefits on your health.

This leaflet, which follows our specially designed video, will give you the advice and tools to take back control and help you to prepare for your investigations and treatment.

To:

- Shorten your length of time you need to stay in hospital.
- Help improve your fitness
- Help you to recover from the treatments quicker
- Improve your diet, so your getting all the nutrition you need
- Reduce the side-effects of some of the treatments you may receive
- Help you to give up smoking and cut back on the amount of alcohol you drink.

The benefits of taking part can be seen in as little as two weeks.



Key Principles of Prehabilitation.

In this leaflet we are going to look at the 4 main principles. Eat well, Move more, Sleep well & Talk more, as well as other changes you can make.



Don't think of these changes as short term, the aim is to make long term changes that help you live well through your journey and beyond.

Remember that every little change can help. Sometimes the smaller, more manageable changes are easier to stick to long term and lastly do not think of these as just individual changes.

As you move through the leaflet you may find that members of your household could benefit from eating well, moving more, sleeping well and talking more. Making changes with other people can help you to make them long term.





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Eat Well:

Eating a varied colourful diet & reducing the amount of beige foods will help ensure you are taking in a good balance of nutrients. There is no need to take on extreme diets unless otherwise advised by a qualified health professional. Supplements or so called super foods are not usually necessary as there is no evidence that they are of benefit.

If you have been recommended by a qualified health professional that you may require supplements then take as prescribed.

The Eat Well guide as shown below is a good starting point to check that you are eating a well-balanced diet.



Source: Public Health England in association with the Welsh government, Food Standards Scotland and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland

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Fluid:

Fluid is essential to maintaining good health. Aim to take in about 8 glasses during the day, this is about 1.5 to 2 litres or around 3 pints. Water is ideal but all fluid counts. Limit fruit juices and sugary drinks as these can contain a lot of calories.

Drinking too much caffeine can irritate the bladder making you need to wee more and also interfere with your quality of sleep if drunk late on in the day.

If you are drinking too little you may find that you struggle with your energy levels, concentration and are prone to constipation and urine infections. Drinking too much can also cause difficulties as you may need to go to the toilet too frequently. And in extreme cases this can cause some imbalances.

Top tips:

- ✓ Aim to keep a healthy weight
- ✓ Eat regular meals
- ✓ Drink between 1.5 to 2 litres of fluid daily.
- ✓ Eat more of a variety of vegetables, fruits, while grains & pulses such as beans.
- ✓ Avoid sugary drinks & limit processed foods high in added sugar, or low fibre or high in fat.
- ✓ Limit red meat and avoid processed meats.
- ✓ Balance dietary fats & cut down on saturated fat
- ✓ Limit salt and foods processed with salt (sodium)
- ✓ Avoid extreme diets or supplements.



Move more.

Be active every day, the more you do the better it is.

Vary what you do. You need a combination of activities. Some that make you slightly out of breath and work your heart and lungs, these are called aerobic exercises. And others where you work muscles for strength training.

Walking is a great exercise, but any movement is good movement.



Infogram taken from the CSP love activity campaign

Remember every minute you are active counts.

Being active helps:

- ✓ Reduce the side effects of treatment.
- ✓ Improve quality of life
- ✓ Reduce fatigue
- ✓ Depression and anxiety
- ✓ Improve strength and fitness
- ✓ Keep bones and heart healthy
- ✓ Help to maintain a healthy weight.



Specific exercises:

Pelvic Floor Exercises.

Pelvic floor exercises are extremely important for all women. They help with bladder and bowel control and sexual function.

To do a pelvic floor exercises start by squeezing around your anus as if you are stopping passing wind. Draw up and feel the squeeze continue around the vagina and urethra at the front. Hold. And then let go it is important to let go and feel the pelvic floor drop.

Do gentle relaxed breathing allowing your tummy to raise and fall with your breath before repeating this squeeze.

Vary the exercise between fast squeezes, squeezing as hard as you can and then letting go. With longer holds.

Slowly increase the length of time you can hold the squeeze, aiming to be able to hold for 10 seconds. And always remember to let go.

Aim to complete this exercise little and often during the day.

Sleep Well:

Getting enough sleep is vital to help you remain healthy.

The amount of sleep we need varies from person to person, and knowing our individual requirements can help.

Set up and keep to a bed time routine allowing time to unwind and relax. This includes trying to keep screens out of your sleeping space to encourage relaxation.

Warm drinks can help in a bed time routine but try and avoid caffeinated drinks as this can cause disturbed sleep patterns.

For further help ask you GP, Community pharmacist or visit the NHS website.



Talk More:

There is no right way to feel when faced with a suspected or firm diagnosis of cancer. Talking about how you feel is an important first step. Knowing who to talk to may be difficult but there are a lot of resources. Your CNS can help if you don't know where to turn.

Alternatively you may find support from these organisations.

Macmillan Cancer Support

www.macmillan.org.uk

Tel: 0808 808 0000

Maggie's

Free information and support for anyone affected by cancer.

Maggie's Swansea

<https://www.maggies.org/our-centres/maggies-swansea/>

Tel: 01792 200000

Maggie's Cardiff

<https://www.maggies.org/our-centres/maggies-cardiff/>

Tel: 029 2240 8024

The Eve Appeal.

<https://eveappeal.org.uk/>

Tel: 0808 802 0019



Alcohol:

Alcohol intake may hinder your recovery post-surgery or going into treatment. Reducing your intake to no more than 14 units a week can help and contrary to popular opinion drinking alcohol before bed can interfere with the quality of your sleep.

If you are concerned about the amount you are drinking contact your GP or alternatively you can access support from:

Drink line. Tel: 0300 123 1110

DAN 24/7. Tel: 0808 808 2234

Alcoholics Anonymous. Tel: 0800 9177 650

Smoking:

Stopping smoking is the biggest change you can make.

Being able to quit takes planning and if someone else in your house smokes then quitting together may help. Your CNS, GP or community pharmacist may be able to provide assistance.

Alternatively you can contact [Help Me Quit Wales](#) on: 0808 163 3031.

What we do:

Your Physiotherapist work to:

- Support you to be in the best possible level of health.
- Use the most up to date information, in order to help you with diet, exercise and ways to helping you prepare yourself for the treatment
- Help you to be as active as possible.
- Be there to help and support you.

Contact details:

Jo Norris,

Macmillan Gynae-Oncology Physiotherapist
Women's Health Physiotherapy Department
Singleton Hospital

Telephone: 01792 285229 / Mobile: 07971 592210





Notes:

Use this page to note any questions that you may have.

