

Exercise programs may improve symptoms in non-small cell lung cancer patients

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Exercise is known to have a positive effect on maintaining a healthy lifestyle, and a study in the May issue of the *Journal of Thoracic Oncology* has shown that exercise also plays an important role in both primary and secondary prevention of cancer.

Dr. Jennifer Temel at Massachusetts General Hospital found that [exercise](#) impacts the health and quality of life of patients with an advanced or incurable lung cancer diagnosis. Between October 2004 and August 2007, Dr. Temel and her team enrolled 25 lung cancer patients in a study to evaluate the feasibility, efficacy and safety of a structured, hospital-based exercise program in these patients.

The evaluation consisted of twice-weekly sessions of aerobic exercise and weight training over an eight week period. The baseline evaluation included assessments of exercise response, functional exercise capacity (measured by the six-minute walk test) and muscle strength. The structured sessions took place in a group format and lasted between 90-120 minutes and also evaluated the health related quality of life.

Although less than half of the participants were able to complete the exercise program, researchers found it promising that those individuals who did complete the study experienced a significant reduction in lung cancer symptoms and no deterioration in their six-minute walk test or muscle strength. The results of this study also suggest that community-based or shorter exercise programs may be more feasible for lung cancer patients to complete. Researchers concluded that additional studies

should explore the connection between exercise habits and [lung cancer](#) survival rates in order to further characterize the future development of exercise programs.

Source: International Association for the Study of Lung Cancer

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