

Exercising before prostate surgery helps recovery

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Credit: Edith Cowan University

Favil Singh has a simple prescription for patients about to undergo

surgery for prostate cancer—exercise.

His research has shown that a regular dose of [physical activity](#) in the lead up to surgery helps patients recover faster, and spend less time in hospital.

"This is the first time we've been able to demonstrate the benefits of 'pre-habilitation' for [prostate cancer](#) patients," says Favil, a Lecturer in Clinical Exercise Physiology at Edith Cowan University and practicing [exercise physiologist](#).

"It is safe, side effect-free and can be done while undergoing chemo or radiotherapy. Just two sessions a week of resistance and exercise training for six weeks can make a difference to recovery."

He created supervised exercise programs to help patients build fitness, including resistance training in the form of lifting weights as well as [aerobic exercise](#) such as walking, jogging and cycling.

Favil was able to boost the patients' fitness levels by 15 per cent, making them much stronger going into surgery, and better able to recover and get back into daily life.

Many prostate cancer patients have to endure a stressful waiting period of six to ten weeks between diagnosis and surgery.

GPs and surgeons have traditionally told patients to rest during this time but Favil found that getting fit and active, even while you're unwell, might actually be the best.

He's now recruiting patients for a larger trial comparing the benefits of pre-treatment exercise to post-treatment exercise.

The work was published in the journal *Integrative Cancer Therapies*.

More information: F. Singh et al. Feasibility of Presurgical Exercise in Men With Prostate Cancer Undergoing Prostatectomy, *Integrative Cancer Therapies* (2016). [DOI: 10.1177/1534735416666373](https://doi.org/10.1177/1534735416666373)

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