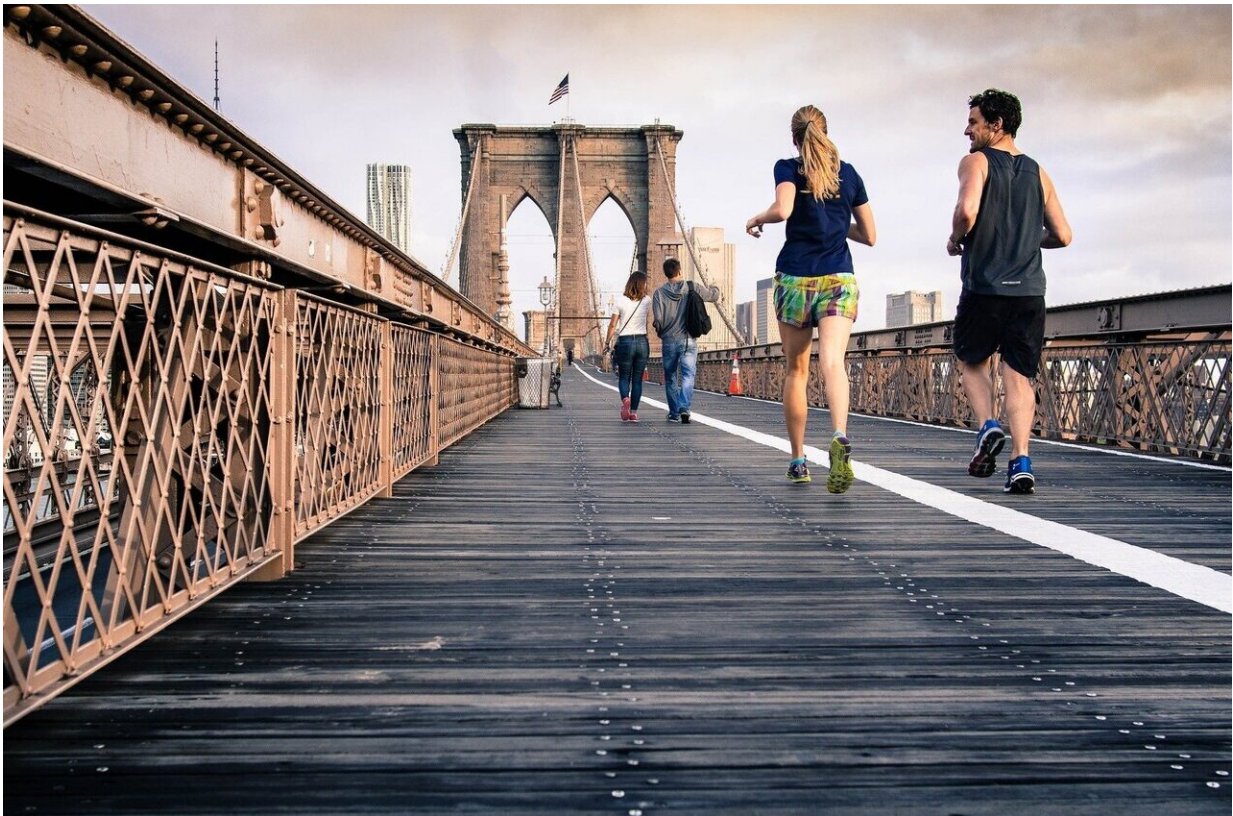


Exercise works for those beginning cancer treatment

March 11 2020



Credit: CC0 Public Domain

Associate Professor Anthony Leicht was part of an international group led by Professor John Saxton from Northumbria University and the University of East Anglia that studied how exercise might help prostate

cancer sufferers who were about to start Androgen Deprivation Therapy (ADT).

The [initial treatment](#) for sufferers involves using drugs or surgery to reduce the level of androgen hormones, which prostate cancer cells usually require to multiply.

"The problem is ADT has several [side-effects](#), including increased body fat, decreased cardiopulmonary fitness and increased fatigue. These can increase the risk of a cardiovascular event and reduce health-related quality of life," said Dr. Leicht.

The research team tested 50 people to see if supervised [exercise](#) sessions could help reduce the side-effects of ADT and how long any benefits lasted after the exercise supervision was withdrawn.

"The [exercise group](#) completed three months of supervised aerobic and resistance exercise training involving two sessions a week for 60 minutes, followed by three months of self-directed exercise," said Dr. Leicht.

The team found the [exercise programs](#) produced sustained benefits in patients' cardiovascular risk profile and quality of life. Differences in cardiopulmonary fitness and fatigue, however, did not continue after the period of supervised exercise ended.

"What was important, and different from most other studies, was that the patients started the exercise program before the ADT treatment began. Other studies have examined patients already undergoing treatment," Dr. Leicht said.

"Secondly, we followed up during the period of self-directed exercise and found some of the benefits were ongoing."

Sustaining the exercise program was important because ADT side-effects continue to develop after the first three months of treatment.

"In older people we often see reductions in strength and physical function just three months after halting supervised exercise. They may stop exercising because of cost or other reasons.

"A more pragmatic approach such as home-based exercise or a shorter period of supervision with follow-on remote support could help get around these restrictions and provide measurable benefits to prostate cancer sufferers."

More information: Wilphard Ndjaveru et al, Exercise-induced attenuation of treatment side-effects in patients with newly diagnosed prostate cancer beginning androgen-deprivation therapy: a randomised controlled trial, *BJU International* (2019). [DOI: 10.1111/bju.14922](https://doi.org/10.1111/bju.14922)

Provided by James Cook University

Citation: Exercise works for those beginning cancer treatment (2020, March 11) retrieved 21 June 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-03-cancer-treatment.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.