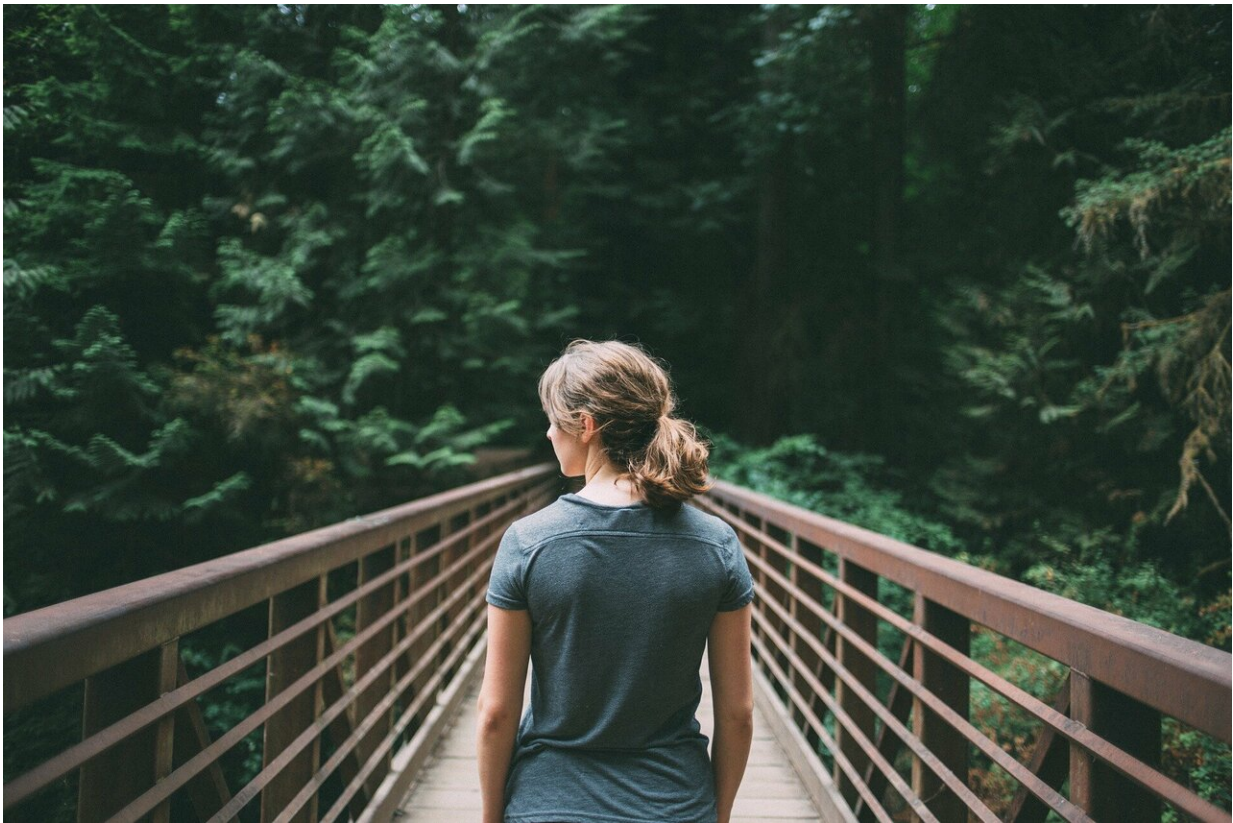


Cancer survivors make strides in community exercise programs

November 12 2021, by Sarah McBride



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In a new research article published in *Cancer*, University of Texas at Arlington researcher and Assistant Professor Yue Liao in the Department of Kinesiology found that cancer survivors improved their

quality of life, physical activity level and physical functioning after completing a 12-week group-based exercise program.

Liao, co-lead author of the study, and her research partners found that community-based programs can be effective in reaching and supporting [cancer survivors](#) and in improving their physical functioning. The team focused its research on minority and medically underserved [cancer](#) survivors who often lack access to physical activity resources.

The team studied participants in Active Living After Cancer (ALAC), a Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas-funded [program](#) at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. Liao is continuing the research by investigating how survivors can maintain the positive benefits achieved through these evidence-based programs.

"My new pilot study is looking to understand how we can help people maintain those behaviors," she said. "I want to explore if cancer survivors can maintain their new behaviors once the program is finished."

Liao plans to recruit participants for her study who have finished the ALAC program or who are currently participating or planning to participate in the FitSteps for Life program at UTA. FitSteps for Life is an evidence-based cancer rehabilitation program designed to assist cancer survivors in achieving and maintaining as much functional mobility and endurance as possible during their cancer experiences.

"I hope to capture a wide range of cancer survivors in their stages of behavior change," Liao said. "That includes those who are thinking about making a behavior change, currently making a change, maintaining a behavior or failing to maintain a behavior. I'd like to better understand the motivation related to physical activity and the patients' daily experiences and then look at what additional support may be needed for

behavioral maintenance for these populations."

Liao's new pilot project is titled Project REMOTE: Research to Examine Motivation to Exercise. It incorporates the use of wearable sensors to monitor participants' daily activities and uses a [smartphone app](#) to survey feelings, symptoms, perceptions and motivations, along with contextual factors related to their physical activity behaviors. This strategy provides her with high-resolution data about determinants of motivation and barriers to exercise in daily life.

This study is funded by the UTA College of Nursing and Health Innovation Center for Research & Scholarship's pilot grant program.

More information: Irene M. Tami-Maury et al, Active Living After Cancer: Adaptation and evaluation of a community-based physical activity program for minority and medically underserved breast cancer survivors, *Cancer* (2021). [DOI: 10.1002/cncr.33904](https://doi.org/10.1002/cncr.33904)

Provided by University of Texas at Arlington

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