"Yes" to exercise for cancer patients

The health benefits of exercise are well known, but cancer patients may question when and if they should be physically active during treatment when their bodies are fighting for recovery. Research studies show that the answer is “yes.” Even if they are experiencing physical discomfort, the right type of modified exercise can be very helpful in improving the patient’s overall physical and mental well-being.

Physical activity classes have been part of Cancer CAREpoint’s services right from the beginning and there are now four types of classes offered at the Cancer Resource Center—yoga, qigong, gentle movement and balance.

The National Comprehensive Cancer Network advises starting slowly. For some people that can be a walk around the block while others may have energy for more rigorous exercise. Before starting on any exercise program, talk to your doctor or nurse. Some helpful questions include:

• What type of activity should I do?
• Is it safe for me to exercise during cancer treatment?
• Are there certain exercises to avoid?
• How often and how long should I exercise?

Reduces stress and anxiety

Exercise also helps patients reduce stress, anxiety and fatigue. One research study of women who had been treated for breast cancer and exercised for 30 minutes four times a week found that the sooner they started exercise after their cancer treatment had finished, the better they felt. In another study of patients undergoing intensive treatment, those who exercised were fitter at the end of the study and less tired.

“Exercise helps cancer patients get stronger and feel more like they are back in control of their bodies,” said Linda Toeniskoetter, one of Cancer CAREpoint’s yoga instructors. “Your whole body has turned traitor and patients want to feel that they can claim it as their own again.”

Linda speaks from experience as a cancer survivor who found yoga to be especially helpful in settling her anxiety during treatment. “I didn’t have the energy to do much physical movement, but yoga’s meditation and breath work helped me come away feeling more calm, centered and strong. The yoga participants at Cancer CAREpoint report the same feelings.”

The National Cancer Institute reported similar findings in a 2012 review of controlled clinical trials of exercise interventions in cancer survivors. The review found that the benefits of physical activity can be helpful to specific quality of life issues such as body image/self-esteem, emotional well-being, fatigue, sexuality, sleep disturbance and social functioning.

Better cancer outcomes

Consistent evidence from research also links physical activity after diagnosis with better cancer outcomes. In one study, women who exercised moderately after a breast cancer diagnosis had approximately a 40-50% lower risk of breast cancer recurrence or death compared to women who didn’t exercise. Similar results were found in studies that looked at the role of exercise and outcomes for patients with colorectal cancer and prostate cancer.

Best of all, research shows that moderate exercise causes no harmful effects on patients with cancer, according to the National Comprehensive Cancer Network, so participating in physical activity that is tailored to the patient’s needs is safe and beneficial.

Visit Cancer CAREpoint’s website for more information on our exercise programs and to view the monthly calendar, cancercarepoint.org.
**We know intellectually that cancer can strike anyone, but it was still an unexpected blow to our hearts when two of Cancer CAREpoint’s most dedicated volunteers were diagnosed with cancer just days apart during the holiday season.**

After years of working tirelessly to raise funds to make sure cancer patients and their families had access to non-medical support, these volunteers are now in need of our services.

We are thankful we can provide services for them as well as all those in our community affected by cancer. Highlights of Cancer CAREpoint’s 2016 include:

- Supported 1,400 people in our programs
- Added support services in the community
- Held our first program in English and Spanish in East San Jose
- Expanded outreach through organizations, local businesses, press, TV and radio

In addition to continuing our personalized, individualized support services Cancer CAREpoint’s strategic plan for 2017 will focus on four key areas:

- Meeting the needs of the ever-increasing number of survivors
- Developing comprehensive programs to serve caregivers of cancer patients
- Serving more parents with cancer and their children with our Family CARE program
- Beginning the search for a new, larger building for our Cancer Resource Center

At Cancer CAREpoint our vision is clear. We believe that every patient and family member in Silicon Valley impacted by cancer should have access to support services to ensure that they have complete cancer care and the best possible quality of life. Our efforts will stay focused on making that vision a reality.

With sincere thanks for all your support,

Allison Jones Thomson  
Board Chair

Rob Tufel, MSW, MPH  
Executive Director

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**Are you a parent with cancer?**

**New Family CARE workshop on Saturday, June 3, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. for parents with cancer and their children**

Learn how to strengthen communication within the family when a parent is diagnosed with cancer. Parents learn how to help their children cope with the diagnosis, and children interact with their peers and communicate their feelings through craft activities and outdoor games. Space is limited and advance registration is required. Email info@cancercarepoint.org or call 408-402-6611 for more information

**Finished your treatment?**

Learn how to cope with what’s next in Cancer CAREpoint’s Survivorship Workshop, an 8-week program for post-treatment cancer patients. The popular workshop helps survivors process the emotional impact of the cancer experience.

Two new sessions are starting in the next quarter, both in collaboration with local hospitals. One session starts April 4 at El Camino Hospital in Mountain View and another begins June 6 at Stanford South Bay. Each session is 6-8 p.m. and participants must commit to attending all sessions.

For information, please contact Amy Goldsbury, MSW, at 408-402-6281 or amy@cancercarepoint.org.
Exercise was her ‘anchor’ during cancer journey

While in the midst of intense training to fulfill her dream of qualifying for the Boston Marathon, Rebecca learned she had Stage 3 colorectal cancer. “Here I was in the best physical condition of my life being told I had a life-threatening disease. It was incongruous,” she said. At age 38 with no family history of this type of cancer, Rebecca credits her primary doctor for insisting on an out-of-the-ordinary colonoscopy that led to a speedy diagnosis and better prognosis.

Rebecca started a treatment plan that would take about a year—chemo radiation, two surgeries and six rounds of infusion chemo. Through it all she continued to be physically active, as well as work and take care of her family—with lots of help and support from family, friends and coworkers. “The role of exercise during my cancer journey was huge. It was my anchor,” she said. “I felt that if I could run, I was not actively dying. It helped me with my anxiety and it gave me the power to shape the narrative of what was happening in my life.”

She slowed her running pace and explored other types of exercise, including swimming, spin classes, weight training, pilates and yoga. “Staying active helped my body respond well to treatment. My surgeon called me ‘a great healer,’” she said.

Rebecca’s first organized run after her diagnosis was the Teal Run in the fall of 2015, and she participated again in 2016. “I wanted to honor my grandmother, who died from ovarian cancer, and to help raise money for Cancer CAREpoint because it has been such a help to me.”

Even though her biannual scans are showing no more evidence of cancer, Rebecca has let go of her dream for the Boston Marathon for now. “My body has been through a lot. I’ve learned that exercise and fitness is a lot bigger than running a race. Right now I’m focusing on my health and exercising for the joy it brings me,” she explained.

“Exercising during cancer treatment made me feel good and made me feel like myself,” she added. “I’ll never stop being physically active.”

Cancer CAREpoint offers physical activity options

In all classes, exercises are modified to meet the needs of the participants at any stage of their cancer journey.

YOGA
Stretching, rhythmic movements, standing balance postures, and breathing and relaxation techniques.
- Wednesdays, 4:30-5:30 p.m.
- Thursdays, 8:45-10 a.m.

QIGONG
Stretching and slow rhythmic movements to unify body, energy and mind.
- Wednesdays, 12 noon–1 p.m.

BALANCE
Strength and balance exercises to improve reaction time and balance.
- Once a month—check the online calendar at cancercarepoint.org

GENTLE MOVEMENT
Easy, gentle movement to music to increase flexibility.
- Wednesdays, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

For more information and registration information, visit cancercarepoint.org or call 408-402-6611.
An amazing year of support 2016 by the numbers

“Walking into Cancer CAREpoint is like stepping into open arms. I am so grateful we have a place like this in our community.”

—Karen, a Cancer CAREpoint patient

Serving more people
• 1,394 cancer patients and their families
• 65% cancer patients, 35% family/caregivers

Providing needed services
• 3,645 hours of classes
• 1,900 hours of support groups
• 798 hours of private counseling
• 612 hours of one-on-one services

Making a difference in clients’ lives
• 95% report feeling less stress and anxiety
• 83% say they experienced reduced pain
• 95+% recommend Cancer CAREpoint to others
Increasing financial strength
• $1,302,934 income – 18% increase from 2015
• $1,296,705 expenses – 79% devoted to programs

Engaging the community
• 7,500 hours of volunteer time donated
• $279,450 in in-kind donations
• 35 fundraising events sponsored by local businesses, community groups and individuals

Introducing new programs
• New Support Groups:
  — Men’s Support Group
  — Healing Through Art
• Exercise: Qigong and Balance exercise classes
• Programs in the community:
  — Nutrition classes in Spanish and English in East San Jose
  — Expanded Survivorship and Guided Imagery programs in collaboration with El Camino Hospital in Mountain View and Palo Alto Medical Foundation in Sunnyvale
  — Nutrition classes in Palo Alto in collaboration with Bay Area Cancer Connections
  — Wig Bank at Sobrato Cancer Center in collaboration with Valley Medical Center
Our Community Cares

Thank you to our donors and the many individuals, businesses and community groups that are supporting Cancer CAREpoint and making a difference in the lives of cancer patients and their families.

A celebration of Cancer CAREpoint’s Wig Bank was held in November to thank its supporters and introduce additional community members to the service. Guests included Wig Bank volunteer Cristal Hernandez and her guests Annie Hernandez and Irene Hernandez.

Cancer CAREpoint was honored to be one of 22 recipients of the annual Mercury News Holiday Wish Book Project. Newspaper readers gave generously to support our work after reading about the cancer journey of Beni Rodriguez and how he and his family were helped with Cancer CAREpoint services. Read the full article on our website, cancercarepoint.org/news

Courtney Schmidt, Kimberley Roberts and Laura Mayer were among the guests at the annual Charity Ball of San Jose Elks Lodge #522, which raised more than $5,000 for Cancer CAREpoint. Thank you to organizer Kimberley Roberts and to all the Elks Club members and guests.

Barbara Caltagirone, Almaden Country Club member and Cancer CAREpoint Garden Party Committee member, described the work of Cancer CAREpoint to fellow members of the Almaden Country Club which raised money once again for our programs at its annual Golf Tournament. We appreciate your support!

It was a full house at the SAP Center on Nov. 5 as the San Jose Sharks teamed up with Cancer CAREpoint for Hockey Fights Cancer. In addition to providing information about Cancer CAREpoint services to fans, the Sharks donated signed Hockey Fights Cancer jerseys worn by the players during practice. The sale of these unique memorabilia by players raised more than $18,000 for Cancer CAREpoint.

Thank you to Breathe Together in Los Gatos for offering cancer patients free yoga classes on Mondays and Tuesdays at 1:30 p.m. To register, please contact Breathe Together.

Grants are an important source of funds for Cancer CAREpoint allowing us to provide our services at no cost to our clients. We appreciate all of our funders and want to give a special thank you to the Sobrato Family Foundation for its 2:1 Challenge Grant over two years, and to El Camino Hospital for the grant that allowed us to offer our Survivorship workshop and Guided Imagery classes in North Santa Clara County.
Soccer, golf and lunch
Three ways to raise funds for Cancer CAREpoint

San Jose Earthquakes—Saturday, April 8
Purchase tickets to the match against the Seattle Sounders FC at Avaya Stadium and Cancer CAREpoint will benefit. Go to https://tinyurl.com/CancerCAREpoint and enter promo code “Fight17.”

Golf Tournament at Boulder Ridge—Monday, May 8
Sign up now for the 3rd annual Cancer CAREpoint Golf Tournament. Be part of this fun day at one of the region’s most luxurious private country clubs. Visit cancercarepoint.org and click on upcoming events for details.

Summit League: A Day in the Garden with Friends—Friday, June 2
One of Santa Clara Valley’s oldest and most prestigious women’s philanthropic organizations, Summit League, is celebrating its 60th anniversary with a milestone event benefiting Cancer CAREpoint. Special guests include emcee Laura Garcia Cannon of NBC Bay Area and guest speaker Terry Curtin, Director of Global Marketing for DreamWorks Animation. For ticket information, visit Summit-league.org.

Special thanks to our retiring visionary founders
Two of the founding members of Cancer CAREpoint’s Board of Directors finished their terms at the end of December - Gay Crawford and Eric Eberle. Both were an integral part of determining the vision and mission of Cancer CAREpoint and establishing the framework that has allowed us to help so many. Gay will continue her relationship with Cancer CAREpoint in an advisory capacity, establishing an Honorary Council for the organization. Thank you, Gay and Eric, for your hard work and for making a long-lasting difference in this community.

Jefferson Award Winner Gay Crawford
Gay Crawford, a founder and Board member of Cancer CAREpoint, was among 49 Bay Area residents to be honored with a Jefferson Award from KPIX at an event at the Herbst Theater in San Francisco. The prestigious bronze medal was given to Gay in recognition of her lifelong work to improve the lives of cancer patients.

Better together—collaborations with hospitals
At the top of our list of vital collaborations is our close relationship with all the regional hospitals—El Camino, Good Samaritan, Kaiser, O’Connor, Palo Alto Medical Foundation, Regional, Stanford and Valley Medical Center. Each one has referred patients to Cancer CAREpoint because they understand the value of support services as part of the holistic treatment of cancer.
An independent 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization. Tax ID #27-3029691
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Executive Director
Rob Tufel, MSW, MPH

Mission Statement
Cancer CAREpoint is dedicated to transforming support for cancer patients, families and caregivers in Silicon Valley through personalized, one-on-one Counseling, Assistance, Resources and Education.

www.cancercarepoint.org

Clean your closets!
Drop off gently used household goods for Cancer CAREpoint on Saturday, April 1 between 9 a.m. and 12 noon in the Cancer CAREpoint parking lot by Building 400, 2505 Samaritan Dr., San Jose. There will be snacks and a prize for the individual who brings the most bags. Your donations will be sold and proceeds donated to Cancer CAREpoint.

Visit our website, cancercarepoint.org, and click on upcoming events for more information or call 408-402-6611 with questions. Special thanks to board member Corrine Fabie for her help in making this happen.

Our services
- Private Counseling
- Nutrition Classes
- Therapeutic Massage
- Yoga/Exercise
- Guided Imagery/Meditation
- Support Groups
- Wig Bank
- Healing Touch
- Family CARE Program
- Survivorship Program
- Resources and Referrals