

my   
wellbeing  
space



Your Guide to  
**Prehabilitation for  
Cancer Treatment**

### **What is prehabilitation (prehab)?**

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Making small changes to your lifestyle, can make a big difference to the way you respond and recover from cancer treatment. Prehabilitation (or 'prehab') involves getting ready for cancer treatment. It can help you cope with treatment and make a quicker recovery.

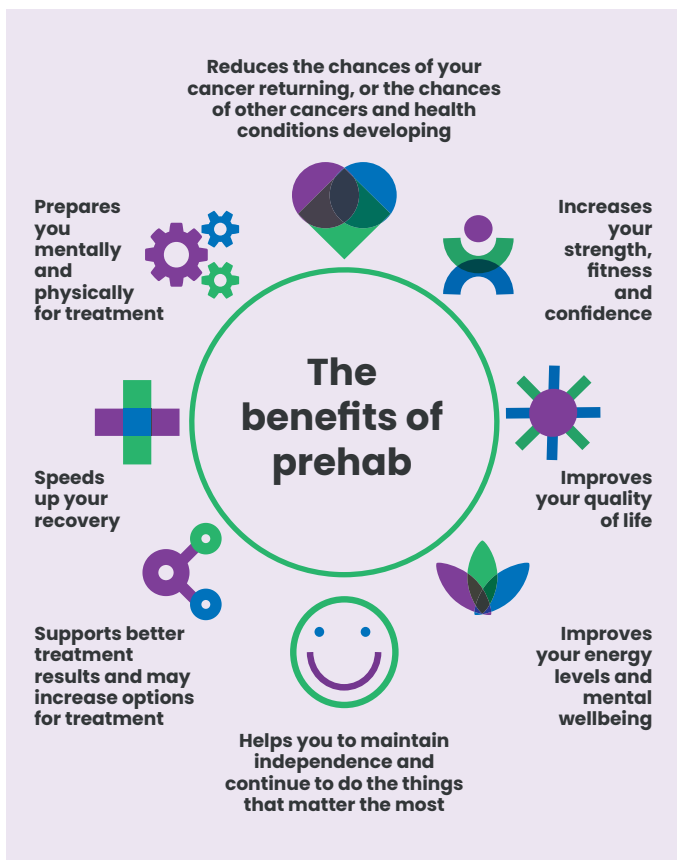
## Lifestyle changes

### Prehab can involve making lifestyle changes such as:

- Doing more physical activity and taking part in exercise
- Eating well
- Taking care of your emotional wellbeing

It can also include stopping smoking, drinking less alcohol, improving your sleep and managing your energy levels.

The time a person has between diagnosis and treatment will vary - even if this is a short time, there is evidence that making lifestyle changes for as little as two weeks can make a positive difference to the outcome of treatment.



## Doing more physical activity

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Following a diagnosis of cancer, it is important to be as active as possible in any way that suits you.

**Most people who have cancer can be physically active and can exercise safely. It can help to:**

- Boost energy levels
- Reduce stress and anxiety
- Improve mood
- Increase strength and muscle mass
- Promote better sleep



**Top tips to increase physical activity:**

- Do something you enjoy
- Keep a diary, set goals and record progress
- Gradually increase your activity as your fitness improves

**Remember, doing something is better than nothing.**

## Eating well

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Eating a variety of foods from different food groups is good for your overall health. Eating well will help your body to be ready for treatment and can also help you cope with symptoms and side-effects.

Your food needs will be personal to you. You may need to maintain, gain, or lose weight ahead of treatment.

**Eating well and keeping to a healthy weight will help you to:**

- Feel stronger
- Increase your energy levels
- Keep your immune system healthy
- Improve your wellbeing



**Top tips for eating well:**

- Try to have 3 meals every day
- Aim for at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day
- Limit the number of processed foods you eat

## Your emotional wellbeing

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A cancer diagnosis can affect how you think and feel. Common feelings include worry, anxiety, and depression. It is important to recognise these feelings and get help when needed.

### Top tips for taking care of your emotional wellbeing:



- Talk to someone you trust
- Open up when you feel ready to – it can help to talk to people who have similar experiences
- Practise mindfulness by paying attention to the present moment; to your own thoughts and feelings; and to the world around you
- Find a relaxation practice that works for you

Many people find it difficult to talk about cancer and how they are feeling. Your hospital team are there to help and can refer you to a specialist if needed.

## Who do I contact to find out more?

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If you have any questions, please contact your hospital team who will support you in the lead up to your cancer treatment. In some cases, you may be referred to a specialist team who will provide additional prehab advice and support.

**To access further advice and information about the benefits of prehab and making healthy lifestyle changes, please visit My Wellbeing Space [mywellbeingspacenca.nhs.uk](https://mywellbeingspacenca.nhs.uk)**

## Acknowledgements

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**My personal reasons for taking part in prehab are:**



1.

2.

3.

**The things I will do to help prepare the best I can for my cancer treatment are:**

1.

2.

3.

**The people who will support me are:**

1.

2.

3.

# 10 top tips

for prehab and a healthy lifestyle

1.

**Move more, be as active as possible**

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2.

**Look after your diet, eat well**

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3.

**Keep hydrated by drinking water**

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4.

**Cut out/reduce alcohol intake**

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5.

**Stop smoking**

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6.

**Improve your sleep and manage your energy levels**

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7.

**Talk to people about how you feel**

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8.

**Practice mindfulness and relaxation**

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9.

**Set small goals and keep a diary to track your progress**

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10.

**Don't be afraid to ask for help**