



---

## The Cancer Recovery Pyramid: Exercise Resource #2 Interval Training: Let's Walk

---

**Interval training is simply alternating short bursts (approximately 30 seconds) of intense activity with longer intervals (3-4 minutes) of less intense activity.**

For instance, if your exercise is walking, you might incorporate short bursts of jogging into your regular brisk walks. If you are less fit, you might alternate leisurely walking with periods of faster walking. For example, if you are walking outdoors, you could walk faster between certain mailboxes, trees or other landmarks.

You can take interval training to many levels. If you simply want to vary your exercise routine, determine the length and speed of each high-intensity interval based on how you feel that day.

After warming up, you might increase the intensity for 30 seconds and then resume your

normal pace. How much you pick up the pace, how often and for how long is up to you.

If you are working toward a specific fitness goal, you may want to take a more scientific approach. A personal trainer or other expert can help you time the intensity and duration of your intervals – which may include movement patterns similar to those you'll use during your sport or activity – based on your target heart rate, the ability of your heart and lungs to deliver oxygen to your muscles (peak oxygen intake) and other factors.

Interval training isn't appropriate for everyone. If you have a chronic condition or have not been exercising regularly, consult your doctor before trying any type of interval training. Studies suggest, however, that interval training can be safe and beneficial even for people with cancer.



### Try this to start

On a 30-minute walk, incorporate a faster pace for 30 seconds every 5 minutes.

Keep the risk of overuse injury in mind. If you rush into a strenuous workout before your body is ready, you may injure your muscles, tendons or bones.

Interval training doesn't have to involve high-impact exercise, jumping movements, or heavy weights. Instead, start slowly. Try doing just one or two higher intensity intervals during each workout at first. If you think you're overdoing it, slow down. As your stamina improves, challenge yourself to vary the pace. You may be surprised by the results.