

FITNESS EXPERTS

CANADA'S FITNESS MAGAZINE

WINTER 2007

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One in every **nine** women will develop breast cancer during her lifetime.

Early stage breast cancer has an excellent prognosis, with a five-year survival rate of over 90 percent. Currently, greater than two million women in North America are breast cancer survivors.

Cancer treatment varies depending on the type and stage of cancer and the age and medical history of the patient. Treatment may include surgery (lumpectomy or mastectomy), chemotherapy, radiation, hormone therapy or a combination of these therapies.

Of course, all these treatments have side effects. Breast surgery frequently

- Increased range of motion of the affected shoulder
- Decreased fatigue associated with chemotherapy and radiation therapy
- Less incidence of nausea during chemotherapy
- Improved sleep patterns
- Enhanced psychological well-being
- Improved quality of life

Women with breast cancer can perform the same fitness assessments and exercise programs as other health/fitness clients with few modifications. To help



Thankfully, due to early prevention and awareness, breast cancer, as well as other cancers, is no longer being viewed as an automatic death sentence, but instead as a chronic illness. Recent studies indicate a link

The Pink Ribbon Program

results in decreased strength and range of motion of the affected shoulder and arm. Side effects from other treatments include fatigue, nausea, pain, difficulty sleeping, lowered self-concept, anxiety and depression. Weight gain is often associated with chemotherapy as well.

About 25-30 percent of women treated for breast cancer develop lymphedema, an accumulation of excess lymphatic fluid that causes arm swelling. Lymphedema can develop at any time - soon after surgery or radiation or many months to years later. Doctors do not fully understand why some patients are more likely to have problems with lymphedema than others.

Exercise training is emerging as a complementary treatment for breast cancer, as recent research suggests that exercise is feasible and can help manage negative psychological and physiological side effects associated with cancer diagnosis and treatment.

Benefits of Exercise

- Enhanced functional capacity
- Greater muscle strength
- Increased flexibility

develop an appropriate exercise prescription, fitness assessments should include measurements of resting heart rate and blood pressure, body composition, strength, flexibility and aerobic capacity. Assessment of shoulder range of motion and strength may determine if the breast cancer survivor has any limitations of the affected side and thereby would need specific exercises or a referral to physical therapy.

The major concern with resistance training of the affected arm and shoulder is its possible role in triggering lymphedema. Consequently, breast cancer patients are instructed to limit the amount of weight lifted in upper body exercises-however, this recommendation is based on conventional wisdom rather than scientific evidence.

The Pink Ribbon Certification Program, founded by Doreen Puglisi, MS, was created to help the health/fitness professionals design safe and effective exercise programs to meet the goals of the breast cancer survivor. As an exercise physiologist, Doreen saw a need to design a specific post-operative program for breast cancer survivors. Hence, **The Pink Ribbon Program** was created. This need became even more apparent to Doreen when she, herself, was diagnosed with breast cancer.

between moderate physical exercise and improved quality of life for all cancer survivors. Exercise protocols like **The Pink Ribbon Program** are needed more than ever as the population of cancer survivors grow.

The Pink Ribbon Certification Course is open to physical therapists, occupational therapists, Pilates instructors, registered nurses, and health care professionals. You will learn how to assess the patient's physical parameters, design and implement individual and group exercise programs. You will gain a complete understanding of the process from diagnosis to treatment, recovery, lymphedema precautions, and contraindicated exercises.

We hope you will consider taking advantage of this opportunity to increase your potential and to help the ever-growing population of survivors waiting to benefit from your expertise. This is a fourteen (14) hour course given over two days. **Toronto Athletic Club** located at 79 Wellington St, Toronto, will be hosting a Pink Ribbon Certification Workshop on April 5 & 6, 2008.

Please visit our website for more information at www.pinkribbonprogram.com.