



Active :  
Together :

*Helping you manage your  
health independently*

Funded by

Yorkshire Cancer  
Research



Registered charity number: 516898 (England and Wales)

# Introduction

This is the beginning of the final phase of Active Together. Over the next few weeks, you will be encouraged to manage your health and fitness independently with less help from Active Together.

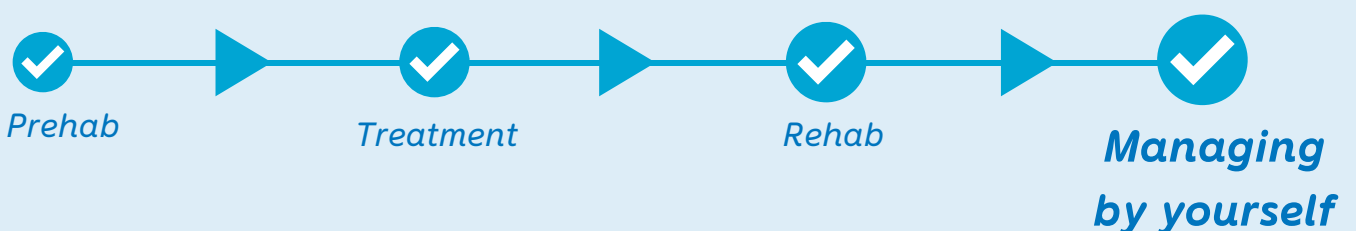
This booklet will help you to set goals and provide guidance on living well after Active Together.

## Reviewing your journey so far

Before you start thinking about what you want to achieve in the final 12 weeks of Active Together, take a few moments to review how far you've come already.

	First appointment	Before treatment	After treatment	Now
Date				
6 minute walk test or sit to stand				
Weight (kg)				
Anxiety/ depression				
Fatigue				

## Your journey with Active Together



---

## **Reflecting** *on your experience so far*

**Use this space to review how you feel things have gone since you finished treatment and think about what matters to you now.**

Think about how you are feeling now. What has changed or gone well, no matter how small?

### ***What do you feel has gone well over the past few months?***

Think about aspects of Active Together you've particularly enjoyed or changes you've made that have made a difference to your life.

---

---

---

### ***What do you feel you have learned over the past few months?***

Consider your activity levels, eating and wellbeing.

---

---

---

### ***What matters to you now?***

Think about what matters to you now. It is normal for your priorities to have changed through cancer treatment and recovery.

---

---

---

## Your wellbeing

**Many people who have experienced cancer take time to come to terms with what has happened and to begin to feel okay again.**

This can look different for different people.

It is normal to have lots of emotions during this time and for there to be ups and downs in how you feel. Remember to be kind to yourself during this time.

### *Living with uncertainty*

Living with feelings of uncertainty after having cancer can be one of the biggest psychological challenges. For many this is due to the fear of cancer recurring and questions about what life will look like moving forward.

Uncertainty can be at its worst after treatment finishes due to the lack of trust in your body and reduced self-confidence. This is understandable. It is important to acknowledge these feelings when they come up.

Here are some strategies to help you manage uncertainty:

- Using mindfulness techniques such as meditation and guided breathing exercises can help you stay in the present moment and not get caught up in past memories or anticipated possible future scenarios.
- Physical activity can be helpful as it allows a sense of control.

### *Trusting your body*

**Cancer treatment changes bodies in one way or another, sometimes permanently with lifelong differences.**

You may be on the lookout for changes in your body and may have been told to lookout for new symptoms by healthcare professionals. This can result in increased anxiety which can be difficult to cope with.

**Tip:** Think about setting personal guidelines for yourself to help you manage your fears. For example, you may want to discuss with your medical team signs to look out for that would need immediate action, or those that can be monitored for a bit longer. Try to get a clear idea of who to contact and when.

## Trusting yourself

**It is very common to lose confidence in yourself after undergoing cancer treatment.**

This can be a result of experiencing a loss of control and power during treatment. Some people can feel that the world is not a safe place anymore, vulnerable and at risk of ill health.

Losing confidence can be difficult to manage and the way to rebuild this trust is by doing things which helps to build self-confidence.

Other people have found these strategies helpful to rebuild confidence:

- Take one step at a time and break tasks down into smaller, more manageable chunks.
- Use the support available from friends, family, and healthcare services to support you.

## Talking to other people

It is quite common for people to say that their family and friends think they are 'back to normal', but in many cases they don't feel that way.

It can be difficult to explain to family and friends how you feel different, and to know how to respond to assumptions that you are well when you may not always feel this way.

### **Tips:**

- To have open conversations with your family and friends about how you feel and how they can best support you.
- Connect with others who have been through a similar experience to you and understand how you might be feeling.

**Remember:** Some people may require psychological support to help process feelings about what they have been through. If you feel you need support, get in touch and we can direct you to the right services.

## ***Eating well after cancer***

**You may be wondering how to move forward with your diet after your cancer treatment.**

It is normal that cancer may have changed your eating habits, particularly if you have had surgery on your throat or abdomen or you have had a stoma fitted. However, eating well and maintaining a healthy weight has lots of general benefits:

- Helps you recover better
- Gives you a sense of control
- Increases your energy levels
- Improves your wellbeing
- Reduces your risk of becoming ill.

You should try and maintain a balanced diet including carbohydrates, protein, fruits, vegetables and dairy. Where possible try and limit foods that are high in fat or sugar.

### ***Five key things to remember:***

- Fresh, frozen, canned and dried fruit and vegetables all count towards your 5 a day.
- Eating a high carbohydrate snack 90 minutes before exercise will give you more energy to get the most out of being active.
- You should aim to drink 6 to 8 glasses of water per day. Try to choose drinks that are sugar free.
- Limit your alcohol consumption. Aim to drink no more than 14 units per week.
- Plan meals ahead. Remember to think about who you normally eat with. If you eat with your family, think about what will work for everyone. Talk to them about any changes you want to make.

## Habits can sometimes slip

Everyone has good days and bad days. It is normal for healthy eating habits to slip sometimes particularly when you're out of routine, for example over holidays or during illness.

**Tip:** If you have had an off day and are struggling to get back into your routine, remind yourself what matters to you. What are you working towards and how will eating healthily help you reach that goal?

**Remember:** Continue to follow any specific dietary advice you have been given.

If you are struggling with your appetite or are concerned you're losing weight, please speak to someone at Active Together and we can refer you to the right services.



## ***Staying active independently***

Staying active long term has lots of benefits. These include:

- Feel less tired
- Boosts your mental wellbeing
- Improved flexibility and balance
- Being able to do more for yourself
- Lowers the risk of cancer coming back.

During your time at Active Together, you have been learning different exercises and ways of adding extra activity into your daily routine. The focus now is to build on what you have done so far, maintain good physical activity levels, be consistent and find something you enjoy.

### ***Remember:***

- The advice is to work up to 150 minutes of moderate physical activity per week.
- Moderate intensity physical activity is when you feel a little bit out of breath, but you can still hold a broken conversation.
- Aim to do activities to strengthen your muscles and improve your balance twice per week.

### ***Create habits that stick***

- You're more likely to stick with something if you enjoy it. Try new classes or activities to find one you enjoy.
- Spread out your physical activity over the week. Maybe aim to do something active each day. Reducing how much time you spend sitting each day is a great way to help you to hit these targets.
- Ask friends or family to join you. Having someone with you can help keep you stay motivated and on track.
- Work it into your routine. For example, if you work or care for others think about when you could be active around those responsibilities.

## *New places to exercise*

The team will support you if you would like to find places close to you to exercise but here are some examples that other people have found useful:

- Joining a gym and trying some classes
- Swimming sessions
- Your home exercise programme
- Outdoor activities like golf, fishing or walking

Begin to make a list of new things you would like to try outside of Active Together:

---

---

---

---



## Moving forward

For some people, they may find the opportunity to reflect and reshape their life a helpful process. Going through cancer can highlight what matters to you and what you would like to prioritise moving forward. Use this space and the prompts to think about what matters to you now.

### *What is your goal?*

Think about what matters to you and form this into a specific goal. For example, if what matters to you is spending time with family, your goal might be to be able to walk far enough to go for a day out.

---

---

---

### *What steps do you need to take to achieve this goal?*

Think about the very first steps you need to take to achieve your goal. Break these down as much as possible.

---

---

---

### *Who might help you achieve your goal?*

Begin to think about people outside the Active Together team. This might include community services, friends or neighbours.

---

---

**Tip:** Writing your goal out and putting it where you can see it regularly can be a good reminder.

## When you have a setback

Setbacks are inevitable. This might happen if you fall ill or go away and getting back into healthy routines can be a challenge. Take some time now to think about possible setbacks you might face and how you can overcome them.

### Possible setbacks

---

---

---

### Ideas to help

---

---

---



## *What next?*

The team will keep in touch with you over the next three months as you manage your health independently. You will then be invited to attend a final appointment to review your progress and ensure you are confident managing your health independently in the future.

In partnership with:

**Sheffield  
Hallam  
University** | Advanced  
Wellbeing  
Research Centre

Find out more online, visit:  
[ycr.org.uk /activetogether](http://ycr.org.uk/activetogether)



[www.yorkshirecancerresearch.org.uk](http://www.yorkshirecancerresearch.org.uk)

