Although the aim of treatments for cancer is to prolong life, they often can lead to diminished quality of life in multiple domains. Cancer treatments are linked to decreased levels of physical and mental health. In particular, the side effects caused by cancer treatments include fatigue, weight changes, muscle loss or weakness, depression, anxiety, and decreased general well-being (Brunet & Sabiston, 2011). All of these side effects can lower a survivor’s level of physical activity, a particular concern among older adult survivors who face the highest cancer burden for most types of cancer (Maramaldi & Lee, 2006; Parry, Kent, Mariotto, Alfano, & Rowland, 2011) and who have more chronic health conditions and poorer physical health than older adults without cancer (Holmes et al., 2014; Smith et al., 2008). For this population, regular exercise has been significantly related to improved physical fitness, reduced risk of cardiovascular disease, and higher quality of life (McTiernan, 2004; Mosher et al., 2009; Winters-Stone, Bennett, Nail, & Schwartz, 2008). To better understand how exercise contributes to these positive outcomes, the researchers investigated the link between intensity of routine physical activity and self-rated health status among a sample of older adults.

Research has shown physical activity to be an essential factor for minimizing negative cancer-related symptoms, such as fatigue, decreased physical functioning, depression, and additional comorbidities among survivors (Courneya & Karvinen, 2007). Recreational physical activity has been significantly related to lower risk of death from all causes in breast cancer survivors and male survivors with varying cancer diagnoses (excluding those with nonmelanoma skin cancer) (Lahart, Metsios, Nevill, & Carmichael, 2015; Lee, Wolin, Freeman, Sattelmair, & Sesso, 2014). Across...