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By: Alexandra Lupu, Health News Editor



## **Exercising Eases Breast Cancer Outcomes**

*Overweight women who exercised regularly one year before being diagnosed with breast cancer have higher chances of milder symptoms and survival*

A recent study conducted by scientists at the University of North Carolina found that women who have been exercising at least one year before becoming aware of the fact that they are breast cancer patients are more likely to survive the fearful disease. Coming after a study which found that obese women are more prone to developing breast cancer, the current research shows that being active and exercising regularly eases the symptoms of the severe disease and prolongs life span. "We found a beneficial effect on survival for exercise undertaken in the year before diagnosis, particularly among women who were overweight or obese near the time they were diagnosed with breast cancer," pointed out research leader Page Abrahamson. The trial involved about 1,300 women with ages ranging from 20 to 54 who reported how much they used to exercise when they were 13, 20 and the year before being diagnosed with breast cancer. All of them had been diagnosed with the particular type of cancer between 1990-1992. Results showed that most women who vigorously exercised a year before finding out they suffered from breast cancer were overweight (had BMIs higher than 25). However, the more they used to exercise regularly, the higher were their chances of developing milder symptoms of the disease. Page Abrahamson explained why overweight women with breast cancer are more likely to have milder symptoms than slimmer women suffering from the same condition: "Once women receive radiation or chemotherapy after diagnosis, they no longer produce hormones from their ovaries. Therefore, lower-weight women wouldn't necessarily gain extra benefit from exercise. However, for overweight women, they are still getting hormones from their excess fat tissue and are at a higher risk of dying. It is possible that overweight women who are exercising are lowering their hormone levels through exercise and increasing their odds of surviving. Previous studies have shown exercise to significantly decrease estrogen levels in overweight women." Researchers noticed that regular physical activity had no beneficial influence on women diagnosed with breast cancer in their teenage years or early adulthood. However, the leader of the study specified that the study was somehow limited because the team was not able to observe the "detailed, long-term exercise."