

Pilot programme will show how exercise can cut down on cancer risk

By SIOBHÁN HOLLIMAN

A PILOT exercise programme aimed at improving the overall health of local cancer survivors will be launched by Tuam Cancer Care this month.

The initiative aims to reduce the risk of cancer recurring in patients and also to highlight the important role exercise plays in improving patients' physical and mental wellbeing.

In advance of the programme, the centre will host a public information talk on the role exercise and nutrition can play in preventing cancer and reducing the risk of it coming back.

The talk will be given by exercise specialist Marie Murphy who has worked on a number of studies in this area with the Irish Cancer Society.

She has developed exercise and nutrition programmes aimed at preventing the onset of cancer and has worked specifically with breast cancer, bowel cancer and prostate cancer survivors through her involvement with the Irish Cancer Society.

OK during treatment

Research shows that physical activity and strength training is safe and possible for most people during and after cancer treatment, and it can also improve physical function and quality of life.

Marie will speak in Tuam on the evidence arising from studies on physical activity and cancer which shows that exercise can help reduce the risk of developing cancer, increase survival rates after cancer, and reduce the risk of recurrence of certain cancers.

Marie, who is based in Dublin, says there is a need for greater public awareness about the benefits of exercise

Tuam Cancer Care centre has programmes to help cancer survivors recover and thrive



in the prevention of cancer.

She has developed simple programmes for people to follow and stresses that even a small bit of regular exercise can make a huge difference in reducing cancer risk.

"It's all about getting active. The programme starts with walking, three times a week for about 15 minutes.

"This isn't about hard training. Being active and maintaining a level of fitness can make a significant difference. You don't have to understand the science behind it, just understand your own level of fitness and take responsibility for your health," she explained.

The free talk takes place in the Ard Ri House Hotel, Tuam on Tuesday, September 11 at 7.30 pm.

Marie says the results of studies among many cancer patients have been amazing. She says consistency is key and people really feel the benefits over time. More details on how to measure your fitness levels are available on

Marie's website www.mbsfitness.com.

Tuam Cancer Care will launch its own ten-week pilot exercise programme for people who have been diagnosed with cancer two weeks later, on September 24.

The programme, involving strengthening and stretching, aims to encourage participants to be more physically active and enhance their everyday lives.

The Irish Cancer Society highlights how research has shown that exercising at a moderate intensity for two to three hours a week after a breast and bowel cancer diagnosis can help reduce the risk of cancer coming back. Moderate exercise increases a person's breathing and heart rate and they become warm or sweat slightly.

Exercising after cancer can also help a person feel better and improve their overall quality of life and wellbeing.

Physiotherapist and exercise facilitator Emer Collins will supervise the Tuam pro-

gramme and will incorporate guidelines recommended by the Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists through their Move4Health programme.

The exercise classes will start at the Cancer Care Centre on the Dunmore Road, Tuam on Monday, September 24 from 10.30 am to 12 noon.

The programme is open to men and women who have had a cancer diagnosis and is free of charge, but registration is required as places are limited.

Further information will be available at the information talk or by contacting Kathy at Tuam Cancer Care Centre 093-2852.

Anyone who has had a cancer experience should check with their doctor or GP first before starting an exercise regime.

It's also important to discuss any other conditions, such as high blood pressure, diabetes or lung problems, as these may be affected by exercise.