Physical Activity and Breast Cancer: What does the research say?

Research can help us to learn more about the things that we can do to improve the health and well-being of breast cancer survivors. Below are a few summaries of studies that have explored the effects of physical activity on breast cancer survivors. Please check with your physician to make sure that it is safe for you to engage in physical activity.

- Becoming more physically active is one of the best ways that you can improve your health after a breast cancer diagnosis (Hamer & Warner, 2017; Ibrahim & Al-Homaidh, 2010).

- Regular physical activity can decrease the chances that your breast cancer will come back. (Hamer & Warner, 2017; Ibrahim & Al-Homaidh, 2010).

- Physical activity among breast cancer survivors is associated with several positive health benefits including:
  - Improved physical functioning (Battaglini et al., 2014; McNeely et al., 2006; Speck et al., 2010
  - Improved heart health (Battaglini et al., 2014; McNeely et al., 2006; Speck et al., 2010
  - Reduced fatigue symptoms (Battaglini et al., 2014; McNeely et al., 2006; Speck et al., 2010; Rogers et al., 2016
  - Improved quality of life (Battaglini et al., 2014; McNeely et al., 2006; Mishra et al., 2014; Rogers et al., 2016 Zeng et al., 2014).
  - Improved sleep quality (Rogers et al., 2017).
  - Reduced symptoms of depression (Battaglini et al., 2014; Rogers et al., 2016)
  - Reduced symptoms of anxiety (Rogers et al., 2016; Speck et al., 2010).
  - Safe even with lymphedema diagnosis, may reduce lymphedema flare ups (Kwan et al., 2011; Schmitz et al. 2010).

References