

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **AMBER Funding!**
- **Updated Patient Guide Book**

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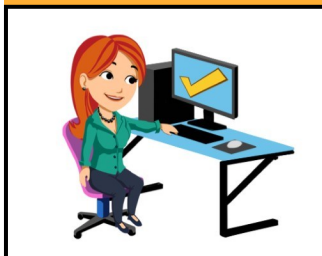
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ISSUE 10

APRIL 2018

Message from the Investigators

As our second winter is coming to any end, we're thankful spring is on its way and we can (hopefully) put away our snow shovels!

In this edition of the newsletter we announce important news for the study and highlight two AMBER participants who have completed their YRI follow up.

We continue with our stretching feature and profile three new



stretches to keep you moving! Lastly we profile an updated guide for breast cancer patients that is co-authored by a Calgary oncologist.

Currently the study has enrolled 84% of the 1,500 participants we hope to re-

cruit. As of Apr 10th we have enrolled 705 participants in Calgary and 559 in Edmonton. To date, 911 participants have completed their Year 1 assessment, 407 participants have completed their Year 3 assessment and 62 participants have completed their Year 5 assessment.

We welcome any suggestions for future newsletters!

Exciting News for AMBER!

The AMBER Study started recruiting in the summer of 2012 with the help of a 5 million dollar grant from the Canadian Institute of Health Research.

In January of this year we received the news that we were once again successful in receiving funding from the Canadian Institute of Health Research! The study has been awarded 1.9 million dollars over the next 5 years. These funds will help the study reach its

goal of 1500 participants. We are currently at 1264 and hope to be completed recruitment next year at this time.



Although it will be a few years before we are able to publish the main findings of the study, we plan to publish a paper on baseline participants once the study reaches

its end goal. Already a subset of the range of motion and lymphedema measurements data will be presented this year at a conference!

The study can only be completed by your willingness and dedication to complete the assessments at each time point.

If we have not said it enough, thank you for your participation! We really appreciate it!

AMBER Participant Profiles

Highlighting participants
that have completed their
YR1 follow up!



Diane D. on her bike trip
in Spain and Portugal!

CALGARY Participant

1. Why did you decide to take part in the AMBER study?

To assist in research to benefit patients in the future and further knowledge.

2. What advice would you give to ladies newly diagnosed with breast cancer?

I would tell them to try their best to be pragmatic about it, to get the treatment they need, to keep life as normal as possible and to keep moving and exercising as they usually do.

3. What kept you motivated during your treatment?

The determination to keep life normal, to give myself things to look forward to, plan for the future, and to realize that this was a short period of my life when my health caused me some grief and inconvenience.

4. What is something new that you learned during your diagnosis/treatment/recovery?

I learned how to paint with acrylics. I had always wanted to attend art classes, to paint or do something creative. I took this opportunity to paint storage boxes for each of my children and learned a lot during the process.

5. Was there a quote or saying that spoke to you during your cancer journey or one that speaks to you currently?

I liked the one that says "Be nice. Everyone in here is fighting a battle you know nothing about"

6. Is there anything else you would like to share about your breast cancer experience?

I look back on my "breast cancer year" as anything but... I look back on the beautiful bike rides I enjoyed, the places I saw, the painting I was proud of, the fact that I allowed life to go on as usual during this time.

EDMONTON Participant

1. Did you make any lifestyle changes after receiving the results of your AMBER study testing?

I had been thinking that I needed to do more to stay fit into my 70's and beyond than just going for frequent walks. Then along came the AMBER study.

My base line results inspired me to start a modest weight training program. I hired a trainer who is interested in working with seniors and met with her five times over the past year to check my form and get new or enhanced exercises.

I recently had my one-year AMBER assessment. I love the DXA scan that is part of the assessment process! It showed that my weight training increased my muscle mass.

Better yet, I "feel" the difference. I can't wait to hit the mountain trails this summer with stronger legs.

2. What advice would you give to women newly diagnosed with breast cancer?

Know that you are not alone. A breast cancer diagnosis is terrifying, but the doctors, nurses, technicians, and volunteers you will meet along the way are all focused on you and what to do about your breast cancer.

My advice is that you become a committed and fully participating member of this amazing team. Listen carefully, ask questions, take notes, follow their instructions as best as you can. Be kind to them and be kind to

yourself. There is magic in working together.

3. Was there a quote or saying that spoke to you during your cancer journey or one that speaks to you currently?

"I gotta stay young if I wanna get old." (Blackie and the Rodeo Kings)

This song lyric tells me that if I want to be healthy and happy as I continue to age, I need to do everything I can to stay "young" in body, mind and spirit regardless of what the calendar says and regardless of the health challenges that might come my way.



Mona E. ready
to be active!

Flexibility in Your Every Day

Flexibility is an important component of health related fitness. Due to age and inactivity our muscles weaken and the joints become less stable and mobile. This aging leads to stiffness and loss of flexibility.

By incorporating stretching into our daily lives we can increase the range of motion in our joints. This daily stretching, in turn, helps us to perform many activities in our daily lives such as bending over to pick up items off the floor.

It is recommended that a person complete stretching exercises at least 2x per week.



- Breathe deeply and often as you complete the exercise
- Do the exercise until you feel a gentle stretch, not pain
- Do not bounce or make any quick, jerky movements while stretching

Talk to your doctor or other health professional before starting any new exercises particularly if you are less than 6 weeks post surgery.

Stretches listed here are referenced from:

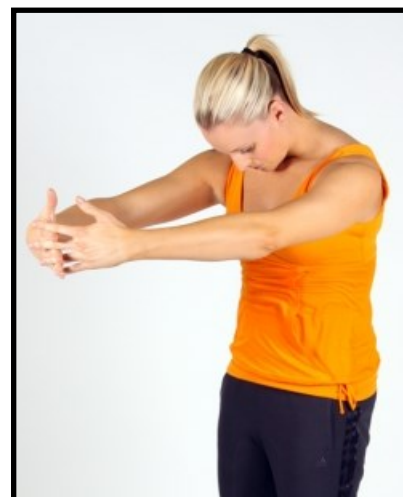
Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology - Physical Activity Training For Health (2013)

When completing stretching exercises, a few guidelines to follow are:



Upper Back Stretch

1. Sitting or standing, clasp your hands together.
2. Slowly lift your arms until they are parallel to the floor and approximately at shoulder height.
3. Press hands away from the body, rounding out the back.
4. Hold for 10 to 30 seconds and repeat.



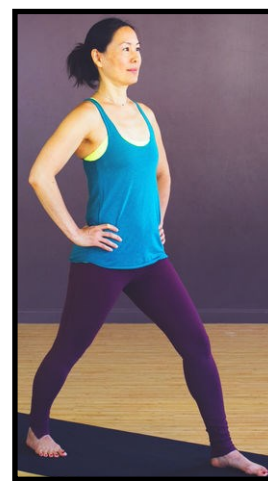
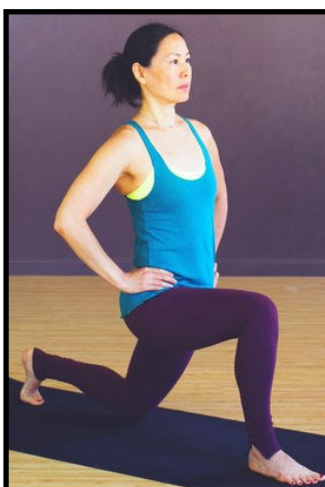
Hip Flexor Stretch

1. Lunge right knee forward with left knee on the floor. Front knee should be inline with the ankle. If needed, place hand on knee to assist with balance.
2. Tilt and press hip left forward until you feel a stretch.
3. Hold for 10 to 30 seconds and then switch sides. Complete exercise 2x on each side.
4. Exercise can also be completed in a standing position.

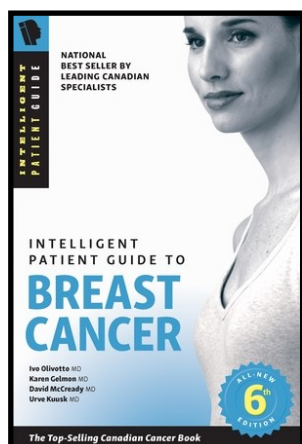
Shoulder Stretch

This exercise can be performed standing or sitting.

1. Bring one arm horizontally across the body. Hold arm with opposite hand either above or below the elbow.
2. Hold for 10 to 30 seconds and then switch sides. Complete exercise 2x on each side.



Newly Updated Patient Guide



The 6th edition of the *Intelligent Patient Guide to Breast Cancer* has been fully revised and updated.

It reflects the significant advances in breast cancer diagnosis and management that have occurred in the past few years, including advances in screening and assessing risk, diagnostic tools, surgery and reconstructive surgery, endocrine therapy, chemotherapy,

radiation therapy, rehabilitation, complementary and alternative treatments, and research discoveries including inherited breast cancer and genetic testing.

It also offers important practical advice for patients, including strategies for navigating the health care system, helpful hints for case managers, nutrition and lifestyle issues, how to cope, and a personal account of the evolution of awareness and advocacy for breast cancer that has occurred over the last 25 years.

This all-new edition includes instructions for breast self-examination, a glossary of medical terms and an up-to-date list of additional reading resources.

Its authors are carefully-selected, superb clinicians from academic teaching hospitals who are writing about the work that they live and breathe every day.

They want to teach you the most accepted mainstream concepts and treatments so that when you ask questions and make decisions with your health care team, you will be taken seriously.

The book is co-authored by Dr. Olivetto, a recently retired radiation oncologist, who worked in Calgary.

The guide can be ordered at your favorite local bookstore or online at amazon.ca, indigo.ca, or amazon.com

Alternatively you may email your order to info@ipguide.com and you will be offered the book at an industry discount of \$16.25 per copy plus GST and applicable shipping costs.



Medical Boutiques in Calgary and Edmonton

Shops offering products related to breast cancer treatment such as post-mastectomy bras, swimwear, wigs etc.

Compassionate Beauty

26 - 22 Richmond Way SW, Calgary
compassionatebeauty.com

Gracefully Yours

6242 99 St, Edmonton
gracefullyyours.ca

Crimson Lingerie

1749 - 1632 14 Ave NW, Calgary
crimsonlingerie.com

Fit Essentials

16506 - 100 Ave NW, Edmonton
fitessentials.ca

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