



A specialised exercise program to support patients with a haematological malignancy

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Background

In 2011 the Leukaemia Foundation of Queensland collaborated with the International Program of Psychosocial Health Research (based at Griffith University) to conduct a survivorship research project. The project looked at the need to support individuals to live with and through a chronic condition. Research showed that, as health, diet and exercise are essential aspects of recovery and survivorship, an exercise program was needed. In 2014, the Foundation partnered with Aspire Fitness and Rehabilitation to create the *Fit to Thrive* exercise program.

Who is *Fit to Thrive* for?

It targets three groups:

1. people living with leukaemia, lymphoma, myeloma, aplastic anaemia, amyloidosis, myelodysplastic syndrome (MDS), myeloproliferative neoplasms (MPN), or a related blood disorder
2. people about to commence chemotherapy treatment, or preparing to have a Stem Cell Transplant
3. people who have completed treatment or are having ongoing treatment and looking to improve their functional ability.



What do participants get?

- A FREE individualised 12 week exercise program tailored to their needs, fitness level, and health
- An initial assessment and exercise measurements
- Goal setting education and mentoring
- One on one sessions with an Accredited Exercise Physiologist
- Small group (max six people) exercise sessions
- Individualised reviews
- Exercise guide and training manual (including programs and photos)
- A social atmosphere and the chance to meet others
- On-going support from the Leukaemia Foundation of Queensland
- A 'What's Next' book, with tips for continuing activity after the *Fit to Thrive* program has ended.

Program Benefits

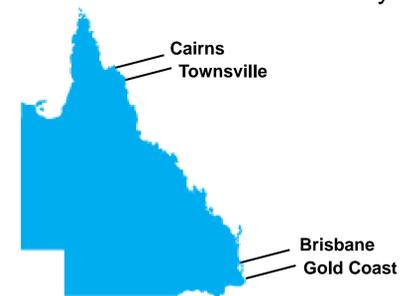
The program aims to give participants the following:

- improved physical functioning including muscle strength, aerobic capacity, flexibility, balance and coordination
- improved quality of life
- decreased symptoms of fatigue
- improved psychological well-being
- improved sense of maintaining some control of their lives
- protection against disease recurrence
- improved ability to maintain healthy weight
- decreased symptoms of depression and anxiety.



Fit to Thrive in the future

Fit to Thrive has been funded for the next three years and will be offered in:



The Foundation and Aspire are also in the process of creating a DVD that details an at-home exercise program for patients, further improving the reach to regional and rural patients.

About the Leukaemia Foundation of Queensland

The Leukaemia Foundation of Queensland is the only Queensland charity dedicated to improving the lives of patients with all types of blood cancers including leukaemia, lymphoma and myeloma.

The Foundation wants more people to survive a blood cancer diagnosis and go on to live a full life. We are committed to investing in research projects which focus on improving patient outcomes and providing free support programs which aim to reduce the emotional impact of a blood cancer diagnosis.

The Foundation does not receive direct government funding and relies on the generosity of the community to support our vision to cure blood cancers and support patients when they need it most.

About Aspire Fitness and Rehabilitation

AFR is a centre for delivery of mid to late stage rehabilitation, strength and conditioning programming, and medically-specific rehabilitation services. In Brisbane, Cairns, Townsville and on the Gold Coast *Fit to Thrive* is conducted by AFR's Accredited Exercise Physiology team.

AFR and the Foundation have consulted with haematologists, oncologists, blood cancer experts, and allied health professionals to develop *Fit to Thrive*.

