

Exercise can help cancer patients: Experts

JENNA MCMURRAY, 24 HOURS —

Armed with new proof that physical activity is highly beneficial for cancer patients, local researchers will share their findings with survivors across the city in a specialized session.

Dr. Nicole Culos-Reed, a leading Calgary researcher in the field of cancer and physical activity, plus a panel of experts will highlight findings showing exercise is a physical, emotional and mental aid to those battling cancer.

The free session, running from 1 p.m. - 4 p.m. at the Foothills hospital on Jan. 22 is designed for cancer patients, survivors, their family members, as well as medical and fitness professionals.

One of the speakers, Dr. Jeff Vallance of the Centre for Nursing and Health Studies at Athabasca University, will share the results of his research on the unique exercise barriers for breast cancer survivors.

He said while the biggest challenge for the general population is finding the time to exercise, breast cancer survivors face physical side effects of treatment including weight gain, fatigue and nausea.

Vallance and his team have designed several tools, including a manual detailing workout techniques, specifically to help survivors.

"It's not about going to the gym to lift weights every day, even something as basic as moderate intensity walking for 30 minutes can help," he said.

Brian McGregor, who was diagnosed with testicular cancer in 2003 and later founded the Calgary-based organization Cancervive, said having exercise goals helped him get to where he is today: Cancer free.

The Jan. 22 session will