



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# LIVESTRONG® AT THE YMCA

## Program Overview

According to 2017 statistics from the National Cancer Institute, nearly 16 million Americans have cancer. LIVESTRONG® at the YMCA is an evidence-based program that helps adult cancer survivors reclaim their health and well-being following a cancer diagnosis.

### PROGRAM BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY

LIVESTRONG at the YMCA is a small-group physical activity and well-being program which meets at the YMCA twice a week for 12 weeks for 90 minutes each session. Participating YMCAs create a welcoming community in which cancer survivors can improve their strength and physical fitness, diminish the severity of therapy side effects, develop supportive relationships, and improve their quality of life. Since 2007, the LIVESTRONG® Foundation has been Y-USA's partner in developing and delivering LIVESTRONG at the YMCA.

The program offers people affected by cancer a safe, supportive environment to participate in physical and social activities focused on strengthening the whole person. Participants work with Y staff trained in supportive cancer care to achieve such goals as:

- building muscle mass and strength
- increasing flexibility and endurance
- improving balance
- improving confidence and self-esteem
- improving emotional wellbeing of survivors and their families
- connecting with other survivors during treatment and beyond

Ys that offer LIVESTRONG at the YMCA become a place of support for cancer survivors who want to gain or reclaim health and well-being following a cancer diagnosis by implementing promising approaches to support cancer survivors, including:

- enhancing partnerships in the oncology community
- training certified instructors to lead programs

- training other YMCA staff and members to welcome and show empathy for those with or surviving cancer
- modifying the environments in their YMCAs to ensure they are clean, safe, and welcoming for cancer survivors and their families

## **PROGRAM BENEFITS**

Researchers from the Yale Cancer Center and the Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Institute conducted a randomized control trial to demonstrate the impact of the LIVESTRONG at the YMCA program. Based on this research, LIVESTRONG at the YMCA was proven to:

- Help survivors meet or exceed the recommended amount of physical activity
- Help survivors significantly increase their cardiovascular endurance
- Improve cancer survivors' overall quality of life and decrease their cancer-related fatigue

## **PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS**

Any adult 18 years old or older who is living with or beyond cancer treatment. YMCA membership is not required.