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WEEKLY WORKOUT: Cancer patients put a new spin on getting healthy

Erin Kiernan & Sonya Hietshusen | Reporters
5:06 PM CST, March 2, 2010



Spinning Cancer

SPINNING CLASSES HAVE BEEN AROUND FOR YEARS. BUT THIS SPINNING CLASS IS DIFFERENT. MANY OF THESE PARTICIPANTS ARE GOING DOWN A PARTICULARLY BUMPY ROAD.

(3:05)

Cycling classes have been around for years, but this class is different. Many of these participants are going down a particularly bumpy road.

Every Wednesday cancer patients and survivors meet at the Healthy Living Center in Clive to talk and sweat. Their leader is a doctor by day and a spin instructor by night. You might call him a spin doctor, pushing the Livestrong lifestyle.

"Knowledge is power and attitude is everything," says Dr. Richard Deming. He's an oncologist who lives by that motto and tries to instill it in his patients.

Every Wednesday there is a cancer education seminar. Some of the people attending are advocates and educators. Others are patients -- some newly diagnosed -- getting guidance from cancer survivors.

"I'm a three and a half year cancer survivor," says Don Cue. He was diagnosed with an aggressive form of prostate cancer at age 45. "Initially you have to learn how to talk about it, and it's frightening."

That's what this class is all about. But when it ends, the participants switch gears and a new class begins. It's a cycling class also led by Dr. Deming. A lot of the participants are newcomers, and Don knows how they feel. "I'd never done a spin class, I'd never been a gym rat," he laughs. "I was not that guy!" But when his cancer treatment left him weak, Don decided to give cycling a whirl. "Certainly there's the fitness aspect. We're spending fifty minutes just sweating," says Don, "but also there's the camaraderie. We've made new friends, and they're just terrific people to be around."

And according to Dr. Deming, studies show exercise and fitness are essential components in cancer care. "It makes a huge difference on the outlook you have, on side effects, and on quality of life." Don says the Livestrong class changed his entire mindset. "Cancer is not a death sentence -- you can get through this. Not everyone does, but you can."

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