

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Strength After Breast Cancer

This course will prepare therapists to deliver the Strength After Breast Cancer program which is an evidence-based rehabilitative exercise program for breast cancer survivors. The Strength ABC program is based on the Physical Activity and Lymphedema (PAL) Trial which assessed the safety and efficacy of slowly progressive weightlifting for breast cancer survivors with, and at risk for, lymphedema. As reported in several peer-reviewed scientific journals, this weightlifting intervention had significant benefits for breast cancer survivors.

The Strength ABC course covers all aspects of setting up and running the Strength After Breast Cancer program including how to:

- Obtain referrals from oncology clinicians
- Screen participants
- Coordinate with a Certified Lymphatic Therapist (who must also be a Physical or Occupational Therapist)
- Educate participants about lymphedema
- Teach the 4-session exercise program
- Instruct patients on how to log their progress
- Motivate participants
- Handle logistical considerations
- Manage discharge and wrap-up

Upon completion of the course, the student will be able to:

- Cite the scientific research evidence that led to the Strength After Breast Cancer Program.
- Identify the structure and function of the lymphatic system, particularly relating to the risks and benefits of slowly progressive resistance training among breast cancer survivors.
- Convey the Strength After Breast Cancer program flow, logistical considerations, and business model.
- Describe appropriate methods to safely and effectively teach breast cancer survivors to independently perform slowly progressive weightlifting exercise.
- Identify established methods for motivating participants to do the Strength ABCs program regularly (twice weekly).
- Instruct participants on how to progress resistance appropriately, reduce resistance after not exercising for more than a week, use appropriate biomechanical form, monitor symptoms, and get appropriate evaluation for any change in symptoms that lasts a week or longer.