

Welcome to your survivorship toolkit! Did you know that almost 12 million people living in the United States are cancer survivors? These survivors often have special health needs. This toolkit has information and suggestions that will help them live healthier lives.

Get started with the 8 great tips below. Next, look inside to learn what a cancer treatment summary is. Then get tips on talking to your doctor, and more!

8 Tips for Cancer Survivors

- 1 **TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR HEALTH.** Cancer survivor clinics can help you stay healthy—in mind and body.
- 2 **ASK FOR A TREATMENT SUMMARY.** It comes from the doctor or hospital that treated your cancer. It should have everything about your cancer and the treatment you had.
- 3 **GET A PRIMARY CARE PROVIDER** if you don't have one.
- 4 **SHARE THE TREATMENT SUMMARY** with your primary care provider.
- 5 **GET HEALTH INSURANCE IF YOU NEED IT.** Staff members at your community health center can help enroll you in a program that will pay for all or part of your medical care.
- 6 **SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT** with a cancer survivor clinic. These clinics can:
 - help you learn about screening tests that you may need, depending on the chemotherapy, surgery, and/or radiation you had
 - give you a complete physical exam and look at any symptoms you might have
 - allow you to meet with a social worker, who can help you with your feelings about being a survivor
 - make a personalized plan for follow-up care that you share with your primary care provider
- 7 **READ *FACING FORWARD: LIFE AFTER CANCER TREATMENT*.** It is a booklet from the National Cancer Institute. It lists the services and resources that can help you live a healthy, happy life after cancer. Your community health center should give you one. If you don't get one, ask your health care provider, call 1 (800) 4-CANCER (422-6237), or visit www.cancer.gov.
- 8 **REMEMBER THAT YOU ARE NOT ALONE.** Healing is a process of living, learning, and sharing our experiences, our strength, and our hope.

Talking to Your Doctor

One of the most important things cancer survivors should know is how to talk to their oncologist (cancer doctor). Here are some tips that you can use during your appointments:

When you are finished with treatment, ask your doctor:

- Do I have a higher risk of health problems because of the treatment I had?
- What kinds of health problems am I at risk for?
- How long after treatment will I start to have these problems?
- What is our plan for watching out for my health risks?
- What is the plan for keeping an eye on my cancer?
- What symptoms should I watch for?
- When should I call you? When should I call my primary care physician?
- What can I do to lower my risk for health problems in the future?

When you come to follow-up appointments, talk with your doctor about:

- Any problems that get in the way of your everyday life. These can be things like:
 - fatigue
 - trouble sleeping
 - sudden weight gain or weight loss, for no reason
 - having a hard time working or concentrating
 - new pain or pain that's getting worse
 - sexual issues
- Chronic health issues. These can be things like:
 - diabetes
 - arthritis
 - asthma
 - heart disease
- Feelings or emotions that have changed or that you have not had before. These can include depression or anxiety.
- Changes in your family's medical history. If you have a relative who found out that he or she has cancer or heart disease, tell your doctor.
- Any medicines you are taking. These include:
 - prescription medicines
 - over-the-counter medicines
 - vitamins
 - herbs

Questions and Answers About Cancer Survivorship

Who is a cancer survivor? When do I call myself a survivor?

The phrase “cancer survivor” means different things to different people.

Some people think a cancer survivor is someone who is done with cancer treatment and has no signs of cancer. For other people, “cancer survivor” means a person who has been diagnosed with cancer and is in treatment.

Can I come to the cancer survivors' clinic?

Yes. You can come to the clinic if you are an adult who had cancer and you are done with surgery, chemotherapy, and/or radiation. You can also come to the clinic if you are still on other treatments like hormone pills or injections.

You are welcome at the clinic no matter where or when you were treated for your cancer.

To schedule an appointment at the Survivorship Clinic at Dana-Farber/ New Hampshire Oncology-Hematology in Londonderry, call (603) 552-9100.

Why should I come to the clinic?

Follow-up care is a big part of healthy living after cancer treatment. Many cancer survivors have special health care needs. The clinic can provide this type of care, along with the care you already get from your health care team.

You can talk with the clinic's team of survivorship specialists about:

- any concerns you have about your cancer
- your feelings as a survivor
- how to manage possible late effects from treatment
- ways to live a healthier lifestyle
- plus more

What will happen at my visit?

You and your survivorship specialist will talk about your needs. Your survivorship specialist will then make a follow-up plan for you and your health care providers. The plan includes:

- your cancer history
- recommendations for cancer screening and prevention
- an outline of possible late effects
- any medical information about your care in the future
- suggestions to help with your physical and mental health
- referrals to specialists that may be helpful

The clinic will share a copy of your plan with your health care team. It is important that your primary care provider, oncologist, and any other health care providers have this plan.



Questions and Answers About Cancer Treatment Summaries

What is a cancer treatment summary?

Once you are done with your cancer treatment, you may have check-ups with your oncologist from time to time. However, most of your medical care will come from your primary care provider.

Some of the treatments you had may cause possible problems called late effects. These problems can occur months or years after your cancer treatment is over. Your personalized treatment summary will help your primary care provider learn more about your cancer treatment and suggested follow-up care.

To stay as healthy as you can, you should have a cancer treatment summary to give to your health care providers. This will allow them to see all the details of your treatment.

What should be on the cancer treatment summary?

- the date you were diagnosed
- the type of cancer you were treated for
- the type and stage of your cancer
- places and dates of certain treatments, such as:
 - details about surgeries
 - where radiation was given on the body, and how much
 - names and doses of chemotherapy drugs and other medicines
- a list of symptoms to watch out for
- possible late effects of treatment
- contact information for all health care professionals that were involved in your treatment and follow-up care
- any problems that happened during treatment
- information about supportive care you had (such as special medicines, emotional support, or nutritional supplements)

How do I get a cancer treatment summary?

The easiest way to get this is to ask your oncologist at your follow-up visit to make you a treatment summary.

If you don't see your oncologist for follow-up care anymore, call the oncologist's office (or the clinic or hospital where you were treated) and ask for a cancer treatment summary. You can also ask for a copy of your medical records.

What's Next?

Cancer survivor clinics meet the special health needs of survivors. Our team of cancer survivor specialists will give you a personalized survivorship care plan.

This plan lists tests you should have, in order to help find and treat any late effects that do come up. When you know what late effects to look for, you can stop worrying about the late effects that are much less likely to come up. A survivorship care plan is good preventive medicine.

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