

PAID PROMOTIONAL FEATURE

Dealing With the Fear Factor

One of the most common worries is that cancer will return once treatment is over. The American Society of Clinical Oncology lists six coping strategies.

1. Accept your fears, don't push them away. These fears tend to weaken over time, but certain events (like follow-up tests) can trigger them.

2. Express your emotions. You can do this through keeping a journal and/or participating in a support group.

3. Stay informed. Random aches and pains can trigger worries about

recurrence, but knowing how likely that is and what to look for can help you avoid panic. Talk to your oncologist.

4. Be proactive about follow-up care. It can help you feel more in control, and regular checkups and tests can catch a recurrence early if it occurs.

5. Lead a healthy lifestyle, which includes eating a well-balanced diet, exercising, and getting enough sleep. It also includes reducing stress and avoiding unhealthy habits like smoking and drinking too much alcohol.

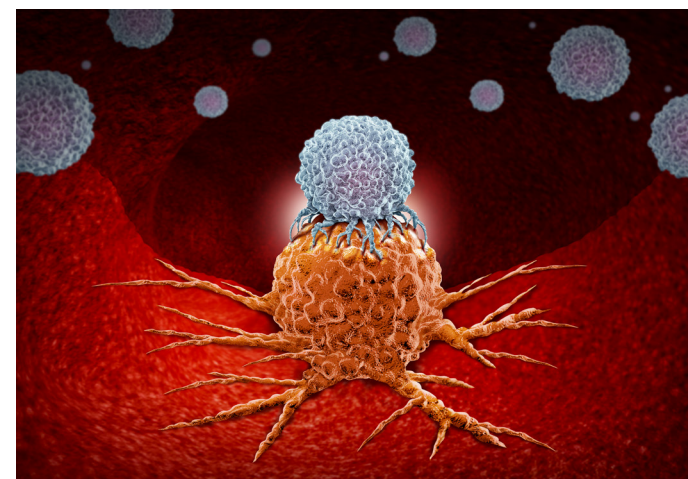
6. Seek professional help if your fears feel overwhelming.

Remember that some amount of fear is normal. There are ways to cope with it so that it is less intrusive.



Did You Know?

June is Cancer Immunotherapy Awareness Month. Immunotherapy (also called biologic therapy) boosts the body's natural defenses to fight cancer. It has revolutionized approaches to some cancers that are difficult to treat, like melanoma or lung cancer. Although this type of treatment does not work for all cancers, researchers are learning that immunotherapy might also help treat some early-stage disease.



When Treatment Continues

Cancer survivorship includes the treatment of metastatic disease. Cancer becomes metastatic when it spreads to a different part of the body from where it started. It is chronic and cannot be cured, but metastatic patients are living longer than before and can be treated for an extended period of time.

Navigating a "New Normal"

"Many say that they felt they had lots of support during their treatment, but once it ended it was hard to make a transition to a new way of life," says the National Cancer Institute. "It was like entering a whole new world where they had to adjust to new feelings, new problems, and different ways of looking at the world."

"New normal" can include continuing side effects from treatment, worry about cancer returning, changes in home and work life, and financial difficulties from past and ongoing medical care.

In addition to medical follow-up, survivorship care includes free wellness programs, like Healthy Living and LiveSTRONG classes and smoking cessation programs from Tobacco Free Florida. Individual counseling, family counseling, and support groups can also help you cope with new challenges and uncertainties. Speak with your doctor or call RBOI to learn more.

quick quote

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by the numbers

16.9 million

Cancer survivors in the US as of January 2019

5%

Percentage of the US population who are cancer survivors

67%

Cancer patients who have survived five or more years after diagnosis

Almost \$50 billion

Spending on cancer drugs in 2017

Keep Breathing

Stress reduction is part of cancer survivorship care. Some ways to reduce stress include:

1. Spending time with loved ones, including family, friends, and pets.
2. Enjoying hobbies.
3. Taking a walk.
4. Taking a hot bath.
5. Meditating.
6. Laughing by reading funny books or watching comedies.
7. Reducing commitments and simplifying your life.

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