

What is Survivorship?

PAID PROMOTIONAL FEATURE



The term “cancer survivor” was controversial when Harold Benjamin coined it in 1986, the year he co-founded the National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship (NCCS). Before then, people were “cancer victims.”

NCCS says you are a cancer survivor from your day of diagnosis through the rest of your life. Not everyone identifies personally with the term “survivor,” but the concept of survivorship is far-ranging and inclusive.

- Survivorship includes both physical and mental health.
- Survivorship applies not just to patients, but also to families and caregivers.
- Survivorship care is holistic, addressing the entire cancer community at all levels of support.
- Survivorship care is a continuum. It begins on the day of diagnosis and applies to the rest of one’s life.

After lobbying by NCCS and other advocates, the National Cancer Institute established its Office of Cancer Survivorship in 1996. The office spearheads cancer survivorship research and supports cancer patients and caregivers.

Robert Boissonneault Oncology Institute takes that support to heart. Our support programs and services are designed to help you and your family from the beginning -- even before a diagnosis is made -- for as long as you need them and at no charge. Completing treatment does not mean the end of care. Our cancer navigators and social workers make sure that you can get the resources and support you need. Give us a call.

Strength in Numbers

Speaking at We Can Week, a virtual gathering for cancer survivors and their loved ones, RBOI founder Dr. Norman Anderson explains how support can literally save lives. Citing a study comparing metastatic breast cancer survivors who did and did not have support groups, Anderson says, “Those who participated in a group actually lived three times longer than those who did not have a support group. And yet their care was identical. So let’s enjoy this time together and realize that we’re benefiting each other physically, emotionally, and mentally.”

RBOI offers a variety of free support activities to the community, including:

- Book club for people transitioning out of radiation or chemo
- Breast cancer support group
- Collaborative 12 week Wellness Program with AdventHealth Ocala
- Friday Zoom guided meditations
- General cancer educational and support group
- Mindfulness for health
- Monthly Villages cancer support group
- Women’s weekly online cancer support meeting

For more information, visit our website or call Wendy Hall, LCSW at 352-527-0106 or Amy Roberts, LCSW at 352-732-0277.

by the numbers

16,353,421

Estimated cancer survivors in the U.S. (based on 2018 data)

About 39.2%

Men and women diagnosed with cancer at some point during their lifetimes (based on 2016–2018 data)

1,898,160

Estimated new cancer cases in 2021

1.8%

Average decrease in cancer deaths per year over 2010–2019 (age adjusted)



NED, Remission, or Cure?

“Dancing with NED” may sound like fun at a disco. But when it comes to cancer survivorship, NED stands for No Evidence of Disease, also called complete remission. It means that the signs and symptoms of cancer are no longer found.

In near-complete remission, some abnormalities exist even if tests show no clear evidence of disease and one is symptom-free. In partial remission, cancer is still present but is greatly reduced.

Some doctors may say you are cured if you remain in complete remission for at least five years. But even then, some cancer cells may exist in your body, undetectable, and cancer may return years later. The chance of recurrence depends on the kind of cancer that was treated. Every patient at RBOI receives a customized Survivor Care Plan that tells the best ways to monitor for any cancer recurrence.

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