

## SURVIVORSHIP CARE PLAN



*When survivors like me finish their therapies, they should be given something on paper that describes all of their treatments, the possible side effects, what they should do to monitor their health and who will be following up on their care. There's so much to remember — no one can possibly keep it all in their head.*

— P.H., Cancer Survivor

Many people who have been diagnosed and treated for cancer feel lost in transition once they have completed treatment. They leave an orderly system of care with few guidelines to assist them through the next stages of their life. The survivor may be left asking questions such as “What is next? Who is in charge of my care now? How do I know if my cancer returns? What should I look for? What should my other doctors know about my cancer and treatment?” A Survivorship Care Plan can help.

### *What is a Survivorship Care Plan?*

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A Survivorship Care Plan is a set of documents your oncology team puts together for you to describe your cancer, all of the treatment you had, and what you need to do now to stay healthy and optimize your wellness.

You are unique and so is your care plan. As you complete treatment, ask your oncologist to work with you to develop an individualized care plan.

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The National Coalition of Cancer Survivorship (NCCS) considers someone a survivor from the moment of diagnosis through the balance of their life. Cancer survivorship is the journey that takes a person from the diagnosis onward. It is the experience of living with, through and beyond the diagnosis of cancer.



*I used to walk around with reams and reams of paper... My treatment summary and plan is concise and easy. It's like having someone go through my medical record and extract the most pertinent information and translate it into an easily readable packet.*

— M.B., Cancer Survivor

WASHINGTON  
**CARES**  
ABOUT CANCER  
Survivorship Task Force

**Healthy Communities**  
Washington

Healthy people in healthy places

An initiative of Washington State Department of Health

Adapted from "Surviving Cancer, Get a Plan" by the National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship: [www.canceradvocacy.org](http://www.canceradvocacy.org)

This publication was supported by Cooperative Agreement #5U58DP000793-04 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

For persons with disabilities, this document is available on request in other formats. To submit a request, please call 1-800-525-0127 (TDD/TTY 1-800-0833-6388).

June 2011

## *What is in a Survivorship Care Plan?*

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A Survivorship Care Plan should include:

- **A treatment summary** containing the dates of your diagnosis, specific information and reports about your cancer, the tests you had, and details on the treatments you received
- **Specific information about the on-going care you need**, such as tests for recurrence, identifying and managing late and long-term effects of the cancer and treatments
- **A personalized set of recommendations** on how to stay healthy and take care of yourself after having cancer, for example, diet, exercise and emotional support
- **Full contact information** for all of your doctors, nurses and anyone else that took care of you

## *Why do I need a Survivorship Care Plan?*

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Having a Survivorship Care Plan can empower you to take care of yourself and remain healthy. Understanding your cancer treatment and follow-up needs puts you and your loved ones in a better position to monitor your health and participate in decisions about your future care.

It will provide important information to other healthcare providers who need to know your health history. It can also save you time and effort of rewriting this information every time you see a new doctor. In the future, you might switch doctors, change health insurance plans, move to another town or state; but your care plan will follow you to your new providers.

## *How do I get a Survivorship Care Plan?*

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Ask your oncologist. Providing a Survivorship Care Plan is not a completely new concept, but it is not necessarily routine for oncologists. There are templates online that could be a starting point for you and your doctor to begin the process.

For more information, visit:

- **Journey Forward**  
[www.journeyforward.org](http://www.journeyforward.org)
- **Lance Armstrong Survivorship**  
[www.livestrongcareplan.org](http://www.livestrongcareplan.org)
- **American Society of Clinical Oncology**  
[www.cancer.net/patient/survivorship](http://www.cancer.net/patient/survivorship)
- **National Cancer Institute**  
[www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/coping/survivorship](http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/coping/survivorship)