

What is “Survivorship”

Thanks to advances in medical research, the effectiveness of cancer treatment continues to improve. As a result, the number of people with a history of cancer in the U.S. has increased dramatically. As more people are surviving cancer, how long a person lives is no longer the only the focus. It is also becoming increasingly important to focus on how **well** survivors are able to live after treatment.

Survivorship means different things to different people. One common definition is a person having no disease after finishing treatment. Another common definition is the process of living with, through, and beyond cancer. According to this definition, cancer survivorship begins at diagnosis and includes people who continue to receive treatment to either reduce the risk of the cancer coming back or to manage the chronic disease.

No matter how it is defined, we know that cancer care does not end when treatment is completed. Survivorship is different for every person. Our Survivorship Program honors each patient’s unique circumstances and helps you develop an individualized survivorship care plan that includes:

- Your own definition of survivorship
- Your ongoing relationship with your oncologist and care team
- A Distress Evaluation to assess emotional and/or physical needs
- A Summary of your medical history
- Specific information about your cancer diagnosis and treatment
- Information about possible late effects and signs of a recurrence or new cancer
- A schedule for follow-up health care including screening tests
- Tips on cancer prevention and suggestions for maintaining a healthy lifestyle

For more information on Survivorship and what it means to you, don’t hesitate to ask your nurse, navigator, social worker or provider.

