

UPMC Hillman Cancer Center, Gynecologic Program

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The logo features the letters 'UPMC' in a large, white, serif font, with a horizontal line underneath.The logo features the words 'HILLMAN' and 'CANCER CENTER' in a white, bold, sans-serif font, stacked vertically.

What is survivorship: FAQ

When am I considered a cancer survivor?

“Cancer survivor” can have multiple meanings. Many have stated that survivorship begins at the moment of diagnosis. Others consider themselves a survivor when they are receiving or have completed treatment and are “cured” or “disease free.” Our cancer team works together closely to ensure the best outcomes for our patients throughout their treatment, and so the term “cancer survivor” is used beginning at diagnosis. All of our providers are equipped to properly manage symptoms associated with cancer and its treatment. Our survivorship program begins enrolling patients after completion of active treatment.

What is a survivorship program?

A survivorship program is designed to manage long-term and late side effects of cancer and its treatment, monitor for recurrence of disease, ensure appropriate follow-up care and care coordination with all providers (oncologists, surgeons, primary care providers, etc.), monitor for secondary cancers, and provide the appropriate supportive care for emotional, financial, and physical stressors associated with cancer and its treatment.

What are long-term and late effects?

Cancer and its treatment can cause long lasting effects despite survivors living healthy and active lives after treatment. These effects are not experienced by all survivors. Long-term effects are those that begin during or shortly after treatment completion and may last for months or even years. Late effects are those that occur years after treatment is completed.

What can I expect during a survivorship visit?

Your survivorship visit will be a consultative visit that will provide you with the opportunity to discuss your cancer and treatment and the impact that it has had on your life and the way that you live. We will review your treatment plan and discuss ways to help you thrive now that you have survived.

What is a survivorship care plan?

The survivorship care plan is a review of your diagnosis and treatment plan that was developed by yourself and your oncology team. It provides a detailed overlook of your treatment and gives other providers a better understanding of follow-up care moving forward.

What actions can I take to improve my outcomes after cancer diagnosis and treatment?

- Eat a healthy diet- Eating at least five servings of fruits and vegetables a day and foods rich in fiber
- Exercise- The equivalent of three hours of brisk walking a week
- Obtain and maintain a BMI of 20-25
- Stop smoking
- Limit alcohol intake to no more than one serving per day
- Follow-up with your primary care provider for regular wellness exams and cancer screenings