

Cancer Survivorship Program

Welcome to the Maine Children's Cancer Survivorship Program! Whether you were a child or a young adult at the time of treatment, you are considered a cancer survivor.

As a survivor of childhood cancer, you have unique health care needs due to your risk of “late effects.”

The goal of this program is to diagnose any late effects you may have and provide information on your risk for developing late effects in the future. We believe that by diagnosing late effects early and keeping you informed of your risk, we can provide you with the tools you need to lead a long and healthy life.

What are “late effects”?

Late effects are side effects of chemotherapy, radiation, or surgery that may occur years, or even decades, after completion of cancer treatment. Experts suggest more than 60% of people treated for a childhood cancer will develop at least one “late effect” during their lifetime. Late effects can include heart problems, bone problems, endocrine (hormone) problems, infertility, memory or learning disorders, and secondary cancers.

Will late effects go away?

Typically, late effects are health issues that you may need to deal with throughout your life. Our goal is to find late effects, provide education and assure you receive appropriate follow-up for these issues.

What happens during each Survivorship visit?

The Cancer Survivorship Program team is made up of an oncologist, a general doctor, an oncology nurse and an oncology social worker. Before your appointment, we will review your medical record. Based on your medical history and risk for late effects, we may recommend blood work. If this is the case, we will contact you to see if you want this done before your clinic visit so the results can be reviewed with you at the time of your visit.

During your clinic visit, an oncologist will examine you and discuss any present or potential late effects. For children, a pediatrician is available for any general pediatric health concerns. An oncology social worker is available to help with any patient or parental emotional or social concerns. The social worker can also answer insurance questions and provide information on unique opportunities for cancer survivors, such as scholarships and camps.

At the end of each visit, you will receive a treatment summary which includes information on your cancer diagnosis, treatment, late effects (if any) and recommendations for future health care. This summary will also be sent to your primary care doctor and other doctors involved in your care. Your visit will last approximately 45 to 60 minutes.

Can I continue to follow up with my primary oncologist?

Yes! This clinic does not replace your oncologist or primary care doctor. Your oncologist will continue to monitor you for signs and symptoms of recurrence until he/she believes that regular monitoring is not necessary.

When can I come to this Clinic?

We recommend you wait to come until you are at least five years after diagnosis and/or two years after your last cancer treatment.

How often should I come to the Clinic?

We usually recommend one visit a year for at least 10 years after completion of cancer treatment. After 10 years, the frequency of follow up is based on your risk for late effects.

I am an adult. Can I come to the Clinic?

Yes! Regardless of your current age, if you were treated for a childhood cancer we recommend follow-up at a survivorship clinic. As more and more individuals are surviving cancer, we are learning more about long term late effects. We believe it is important to pass information on to you so that you can continue to make informed health care decisions.

I received treatment at a different institution. Can I come to this Clinic?

Yes! We welcome anyone who has been treated for a childhood cancer.

How do I make an appointment?

You may call (207) 396-7565 to make an appointment. Please send a copy of your medical record from the time of your cancer treatment to our office before making an appointment. We can help you with this.

Will this visit be covered by insurance?

Most insurance policies will cover one visit a year, but we recommend calling your insurance provider to confirm.

We recognize everyone's experience with cancer is unique. Some people will have few, if any, late effects while others may have late effects which will need long term monitoring. This clinic helps to navigate the changes and challenges that are present after cancer treatment.

Maine Children's Cancer Program

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A program devoted to improving the health and well-being of all individuals who have been treated for a childhood cancer