

# POST-TREATMENT SURVIVORSHIP: FOLLOW-UP CARE AND RETURNING TO WORK

One helpful tool for managing your follow-up care is a post-treatment survivorship care plan, which helps you work effectively with your primary care doctor as well as other members of your health care team to maintain best care. You can use the checklists provided below as guides.

## SUMMARY CHECKLIST

**Ask your doctor for a treatment summary, which may include:**

- The type and stage of the cancer(s) you were diagnosed with, as well as the date you were diagnosed.
- The types of treatment you received (including surgical procedures, names of chemotherapy drugs, radiation doses and all tests that were performed) and dates performed.
- Complications experienced (such as side effects, transfusions and hospitalizations).
- Other treatments used (such as physical therapy, acupuncture, herbs, vitamins or other alternative treatments).



## FOLLOW-UP PLAN CHECKLIST

**Discuss with your doctor what your follow-up care plan will be. This may include:**

- A description of your state of health at the end of treatment.
- A future schedule of visits (time and date).
- Who will deliver follow-up care (and where).
- Tests that will be done and why they are needed.
- What long-term effects might occur (such as swelling or numbness in the limbs, pain or depression), how to watch for them and how they will be treated.
- Symptoms to watch for that might signal a return of your cancer.
- Steps you can take to adopt a healthier lifestyle.

## RETURNING TO WORK: LAWS YOU SHOULD KNOW

Many are able to continue working through and beyond their treatment. They may miss only a few days of work or require just a temporary adjustment in their work schedules. Others may have to stop working during treatment and return later. Whether you continue to work may depend on your workplace; each company has its own unique culture.

**Many organizations are supportive of employees during and after treatment.** For example, some employers proactively let their employees know what options are available if they want to continue working. However, sometimes employers and coworkers may assume that someone in post-treatment is unable to perform job responsibilities as well as before the cancer diagnosis. It is important to know the laws that protect you in the workplace, including:

**The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**

prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities. Organizations with 15 or more employees must follow ADA guidelines. To qualify for ADA protection, you must:

- Meet the ADA definition of a “disabled person.”
- Qualify for the job and be able to perform its essential functions.
- Not pose a risk to your own or others’ health and safety.
- Not cause “undue hardship” to your employer for any accommodations you might need.

People living with and beyond cancer often need flexible work hours in order to go to medical appointments. Sometimes, restructuring a job or reducing the number of hours you work may be considered reasonable, especially if you work through treatment or plan to return to the workplace after treatment ends.

**CancerCare® Can Help**

Founded in 1944, CancerCare is the leading national organization providing free support services and information to help people manage the emotional, practical and financial challenges of cancer. Our comprehensive services include case management, counseling and support groups over the phone, online and in-person, educational workshops, publications and financial and co-payment assistance. All CancerCare services are provided by master’s-prepared oncology social workers and world-leading cancer experts.

To learn more, visit [www.cancercare.org](http://www.cancercare.org) or call **800-813-HOPE (4673)**.

**Facebook:** [facebook.com/CancerCare](https://facebook.com/CancerCare) | **Instagram:** @CancerCareUS | **Twitter:** @CancerCare

If you require flextime, it is important to tell your supervisor or your human resources department about your cancer history in order to be protected under the ADA. If you don’t give any reason for frequent flextime requests, you could risk losing your job. For more information, call 800-514-0301 or visit the ADA website, [www.ada.gov](http://www.ada.gov).

**The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)** enables people coping with a serious illness, or one of their family members, to take unpaid leave for up to 12 weeks within one calendar year. The FMLA applies to organizations with 50 or more employees.

The employee must have worked with their employer for at least one year, and employers must continue providing health benefits during the leave. Leave does not have to be taken all at once but can be taken in blocks of time. To learn more, visit the U.S. Department of Labor’s website at [www.dol.gov](http://www.dol.gov) and search for FMLA.

If you feel you are being treated unfairly, contact the **Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)**. The EEOC is a federal agency that enforces the provisions of the ADA and FMLA and helps people who feel they have been discriminated against in the workplace. Call 800-669-4000 or visit [www.eeoc.gov](http://www.eeoc.gov).

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