

Online Resources

Siteman Survivorship Program
siteman.washu.edu/survivors

National Cancer Institute
cancer.gov

American Cancer Society
cancer.org

**Substance Abuse and Mental
Health Services Administration
(SAMHSA)**
samhsa.gov

National Alliance on Mental Health (NAMI)
nami.org

SmokeFree.gov
smokefree.gov

CDC-Family Health History
cdc.gov/family-health-history

8ight Ways to Prevent Cancer Series
8ways.washu.edu



8IGHTWAYS[®] TO STAY HEALTHY BEYOND CANCER

For more information about Siteman Cancer Center and our locations, visit siteman.washu.edu or call **800-600-3606**.



Siteman Cancer Center complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex.

Atención: hay servicios de asistencia de idiomas disponibles a su disposicion sin costo. Llame al 314-747-5682 (TTY: 1-800-735-2966).

注意：免费提供语言协助服务，如有需要敬请致电 314-747-5682 (TTY: 1-800-735-2966)。



8IGHTWAYS[®] TO STAY HEALTHY BEYONDCANCER

healthy behaviors for cancer survivors

Cancer Is Hard. No two ways about it. Diagnosis and treatment can be frightening and exhausting, and even after you’ve made it past those hurdles, you need to adjust to life as you move beyond cancer.

You’re not alone. There are more people in the United States living with a cancer diagnosis than ever before, and many lead active, meaningful and health-filled lives.

These eight “ways” can help you look after your health and well-being as a survivor. Your doctor can help guide you. And wherever you are in your cancer experience – just diagnosed, in treatment, or done with treatment – even small healthy changes can lead to big benefits.

Look After Your Mental Health

A diagnosis of cancer, and everything that follows, can impact mental and emotional health. And it’s common for survivors to have stress, anxiety, depression and related issues at some point. So, it’s important to make your mental health as much a priority as your physical health. If you ever feel that you might need help, reach out to a health professional. Treatments, like talk therapy and medication, can help you feel better.

Tips

- For support and resources, contact the National Alliance on Mental Health (NAMI) Helpline at **800-950-NAMI** or visit **nami.org**.
- If you’re in crisis, call **988** - The Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.
- Move your body. In addition to professional care, physical activity, like walking and yoga, can help with anxiety and depression.

Don’t Smoke

You’ve heard it before. But, if you smoke, the single best thing you can do as a survivor is stop. It’ll lower your risk of developing a second cancer as well as heart disease, stroke and other serious diseases that can also impact survivors. Yes, it’s hard. But you can do it. And if you don’t smoke, be sure to stay smoke-free and try to avoid secondhand smoke.

Tips

- Keep trying! It often takes many tries before you quit for good.
- Talk to a health care provider for help; it can double your chances of success.
- Call **800-QUITNOW (866-QUITYES** in IL) or visit **smokefree.gov** for extra help.

Be Physically Active

For many reasons, it can be hard for everyone to fit physical activity into their days. But its benefits for cancer survivors are really worth the effort – even for those in the middle of treatment. Regular activity improves overall health, boosts energy and mobility and helps with anxiety, depression and cancer-related symptoms. Plus, it may lower the risk of recurrence and improve survival after cancer.

Start by moving a little more than you normally would. Even small amounts can have big benefits. Do what you can. And slowly build up over time. A good long-term goal is 30 minutes or more of daily activity (like walking), plus strength activities (like stretching and using resistance bands) two or more times per week.

Tips

- Start slowly with any new program and don’t be shy about asking for help.
- Fit in small activities during the day, like taking the stairs a floor or two, walking from the far end of the parking lot and taking a regular stretching break during the workday.

Maintain a Healthy Weight

With the stress, treatment side effects and changes to routines that a cancer diagnosis can bring, weight can be a tough issue for many survivors. Plus, body shape can naturally change after cancer. But trying to keep weight in check is one of the best things you can do to improve your overall health and quality of life.

Tips

- Avoid sugary drinks.
- Get enough sleep.
- Choose smaller portions, and eat more slowly.
- Limit screen time, and try to stand more.

Eat A Healthy Diet

It may be surprising to hear, but the healthiest diet for survivors is the same as it is for everyone else. And it’s really pretty simple. Try to focus on fruits, vegetables, whole grains, beans and healthy fats, like olive and canola oil. And limit red meat, processed meat and full-fat dairy.

Tips

- Make fruits and vegetables a part of every meal.
- Choose whole-grain cereal and whole-wheat bread over sugary cereals and white bread.
- Cut back on fast food and store-bought meals. Instead, try planning and making meals at home ahead of your week.
- Eating a healthy diet is best – but consider a standard multivitamin if you regularly fall short.
- Follow food safety steps to avoid food poisoning.

Limit Alcohol – Zero is Best

The more we know about alcohol, the more we know that not drinking is the healthiest choice overall. Alcohol can have many risks, including an increased chance of another cancer, even at low levels.

Tips

- Choose alcohol-free drinks at meals and parties. And plan ahead and bring your own if you have to.
- Stock up on healthy, alcohol-free options at home, like fizzy water.
- Talk to a health care professional if you feel you have a problem with alcohol, or if you need help with stress, anxiety, or similar issues.

Stay Connected With Friends, Family, And Other Survivors

There is real power in staying connected with friends, family and other cancer survivors. Keeping up and building on a support network can significantly improve quality of life, and possibly even prognosis. Yet, cancer can feel isolating for many survivors even in today’s social media world. So, if you need help connecting or re-connecting, reach out to a health professional or your oncology team.

Tips

- Schedule a time each week to get together with friends or family.
- Take part in meetings for cancer survivors, which can be a great way to share feelings, concerns, and helpful information with those who’ve been through similar things.
- Connect in the way that works best for you: In-person, or virtually with video, social media, phone or email.

Get Screening Tests And Go To Your Regular Check-Ups

As a survivor, it’s important to go to your regular post-treatment check-ups with your primary care doctor and oncology team. These visits are not only key to your health as a survivor but also great places to share any concerns or questions you have about your health. Team up with your providers to manage your health needs.

In addition to any follow up tests specific to your cancer, it’s also important to keep getting recommended screening tests for other cancers and other disease risk factors.

Talk to your doctor about tests that screen for:

- Breast cancer - Colon cancer
- Cervical cancer - Hepatitis B&C
- High blood sugar - High blood pressure
- Lung cancer (for people who smoke or used to smoke)
- Prostate cancer - Osteoporosis
- Unhealthy blood cholesterol



Also key is keeping up with your medications – whether they’re for your cancer or other health issues. If you’re having trouble, talk to your provider. Together, you can make a plan to get back on track.