

Your follow-up care after breast cancer treatment

You have completed treatment for breast cancer at the Cancer Centre of Southeastern Ontario. Your follow-up care will now be transferred to your family doctor or nurse practitioner from your cancer care team at the Cancer Centre. A detailed report of your cancer care has been sent to your family doctor stating that your treatment has now ended at the Cancer Centre.

It is your responsibility to arrange your follow-up visits with your family doctor. Please call your doctor's office to book your 1st follow-up visit for within the next 6 months. It is important for you to go for a physical exam and to talk about any health concerns that you have.

You are still a registered patient at the Cancer Centre. The transfer of your follow-up care to your family doctor means that we feel you are doing well. If there are any concerns about cancer recurrence, your family doctor will refer you back to the cancer care team at the Cancer Centre.

This handout summarizes what to expect with future care after your breast cancer treatment. We hope this helps you feel prepared for transitioning to follow-up care.

Recommended follow-up care

- For everyone after breast cancer treatment:

Follow-up needed	How often	Next due date
Exam by your doctor	Every 6 months for 3 years after your breast cancer diagnosis, then yearly	_____ _____ _____
Mammogram	Yearly	_____ _____ _____
Breast and armpit self-exam (both sides)	Monthly	_____ _____ _____
Unless you develop concerning symptoms, the following tests are not recommended for routine follow-up: regular chest x-rays, CT scans, bone scans, ultrasounds of the abdomen or lab tests.		

- If you take Aromatase Inhibitors (Anastrozole/Arimidex, Exemestane/Aromasin, Letrozole/Femara):

Follow-up Needed	How Often	Next Due Date
Bone Mineral Density Test (Aromatase Inhibitors can cause your bones to thin)	Talk to your family doctor about how often	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Cholesterol Blood Work (Aromatase Inhibitors may cause high cholesterol)	Yearly	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>For women who have gone through menopause, we recommend you also do the following to reduce bone thinning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise regularly • Take Calcium (1000 to 1500 mg daily) and Vitamin D (1000-2000 IU daily) to help keep your bones strong. Additional medications may be prescribed if you are diagnosed with thin bones or at risk for breaking a bone. 		

- If you take Aromatase Inhibitors or Tamoxifen, please contact your family doctor **immediately** if you have:
- Unusual vaginal bleeding
 - A swollen leg or arm
 - Sudden difficulty breathing

Health problems to report to your family doctor

If you have any new or ongoing symptoms that are getting worse and do not go away, please tell your family doctor without waiting for your next follow-up appointment. These symptoms may or may not be related to cancer but it is still important to have them checked.

Symptoms include:

- New pain that won't go away
- Cough that won't go away
- Tired feeling that won't go away
- Loss of appetite
- Tingling or numbness in the arm or hand
- Nipple tenderness, discharge or physical changes
- Vaginal bleeding or slight spotting
- Problems with memory or concentration
- Sudden swelling of the arm, same side as cancer site

After treatment support

Adjusting to life after treatment is different for everyone. There may be problems you're still dealing with, like coping with long term side effects or concerns about the future. Talk to your family doctor if you have any concerns or questions about ongoing physical or emotional problems, including fatigue, sexual changes, anxiety or coping with stress.

Patient and family resources after breast cancer treatment

Information Sources	<p>Breast Cancer Action Kingston</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A survivor led, charitable organization, working to educate and support women and men living with breast cancer, their families and the community.• Phone 613-531-7912. Website www.bcakingston.org <p>Canadian Cancer Society's Cancer Information Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides general information over the telephone in English and French. Phone 1-888-939-3333 <p>Patient and Family Resource Centre, Cancer Centre of Southeastern Ontario at Kingston General Hospital</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Located near the King Street entrance on the ground level of the Burr Wing (Burr 0).• Find free pamphlets or borrow books, audiobooks and DVDs. Computers linked to the Internet are also available for your use.
Booklets and Pamphlets	<p>Getting Back on Track: Life after breast cancer treatment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• By Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation and Princess Margaret Hospital• Complete resource that addresses normal concerns during transition after breast cancer treatment. <p>Life after Cancer: A guide for cancer survivors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Published by the Canadian Cancer Society• Available in English and French online at www.cancer.ca
Selected Books	<p>After Breast Cancer: A Common Sense Guide to Life after Treatment, by Hester Hill Schnipper (2006)</p> <p>Living Well Beyond Breast Cancer, by Marisa Weiss and Ellen Weiss (2010)</p> <p>100 Questions & Answers About Life After Cancer: A Survivor's Guide, by Page Tolbert and Penny Damaskos (2008)</p> <p>Surviving After Cancer: Living the New Normal, by Anne Katz (2011)</p>

	<p>Thriving After Breast Cancer: Essential Healing Exercises for Body and Mind, by Sherry Lebed Davis (2002)</p>
Websites	<p>Canadian Cancer Society. Search breast cancer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.cancer.ca <p>Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.cbcbf.org/ontario <p>Canadian Breast Cancer Network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.cbcbn.ca <p>BC Cancer Agency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.bccancer.bc.ca. Search breast cancer. <p>Willow Breast Cancer Support Canada</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.willow.org
Support Groups	<p>Breast Cancer Action Kingston (local)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone: 613-531-7912. Website www.bcakingston.org <p>Look Good Feel Better (local)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop that helps women to cope with the appearance related side effects of cancer treatment. To register, phone 613-549-6666 extension 7480 <p>Cancer Connection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telephone support program that connects you with a trained volunteer who has had a similar experience. Phone 1-888-939-3333 <p>Cancer Chat Canada</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A professionally led online support group for Canadians affected by cancer. Website www.cancerchatcanada.ca <p>Caring Voices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactive online support community for cancer survivors. Website www.caringvoices.ca