

Lifestyle management

You can play the most important role in cancer prevention by optimizing your lifestyle.

Smoking is implicated in many cancers.

If you smoke – consider quitting and talk to your health care professional about supports for smoking cessation. www.quitnow.ca

Diet – Aim for a healthy body weight. Eat a balanced diet from the four food groups. Choose more fruits, vegetables, whole grains & legumes. Limit red meat and avoid processed meats or overly refined foods. Limit high calorie foods, including food high in sugar and fats, which are often low in fibre, vitamins and minerals.

www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index-eng.php

www.aicr.org

Dial-a-Dietitian:

Vancouver: 604.732.9191

Toll Free: 1.800.667.3438

Exercise – recommendations suggest 30-60 minutes per day of physical activity. This can be broken down into smaller time frames several times per day.

www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/paguid/index.html

Other available supports

There may be a Colorectal Cancer Support Group in your area offering education, information and support. Contact Patient & Family Counselling at the BCCA for further information or search the BCCA website:

<http://www.bccancer.bc.ca/PPI/default.htm>

The BCCA library, also available at this link offers many valuable resources.

Helpful Websites

www.cancer.ca

www.colorectal-cancer.ca

www.coloncancercanada.ca

www.livestrong.org

www.cancer.net

Your follow-up program

Follow-up	Dates
Doctor visit & CEA	Every 3 months for 3 years then every 6 months for 2 more years
Colonoscopy	Once in the first year then every 3 – 5 years
Liver Imaging	Every 6 months for 3 years then every year for 2 more years
Chest X-ray (if rectal cancer)	Every 6 – 12 months for 5 years

Abbotsford Centre
 32900 Marshall Road
 Abbotsford, B.C. V2S 0C2
 Phone: 604.851.4710
 Toll-free: 1.877.547.3777

Centre for the Southern Interior
 399 Royal Avenue
 Kelowna, B.C. V1Y 5L3
 Phone: (250) 712.3900
 Toll-free: 1.888.563.7773

Fraser Valley Centre
 13750 96th Avenue
 Surrey, B.C. V3V 1Z2
 Phone: 604.930.2098
 Toll-free: 1.523.2885

Prince George Centre
 (to open in 2012)

Vancouver Centre
 600 West 10th Avenue
 Vancouver, B.C. V5Z 4E6
 Phone: 604.877.6000
 Toll-free: 1.800.663.3333

Vancouver Island Centre
 2410 Lee Avenue
 Victoria, B.C. V8R 6V5
 Phone: (250) 519.5500
 Toll-free: 1.800.670.3322



Follow-up Program after colorectal cancer treatments



You are part of the team!

The transition period after completing your cancer treatment can be a time of conflicting emotions. You may be happy to be finished treatment but also a bit worried or anxious about the next steps. You may wonder who will be watching out for you now that your cancer specialists are no longer seeing you on a regular basis.

Follow-up care after treatment is very important and as part of the team, you can take an active part in your care.

There are recommended guidelines for follow-up care after colorectal cancer treatments. The main goals are a healthy lifestyle and surveillance in case of relapse.

The following guidelines will help you take charge of your health and develop an action plan with your primary care practitioner.

Your medical team

Your medical team includes your oncologist, family doctor or nurse practitioner, your surgeon and perhaps gastroenterologist. Usually your primary care physician or perhaps a nurse practitioner will be responsible for coordinating the recommended follow-up care. In some cases, your surgeon will be responsible for your follow-up care. Your surgeon may discuss this with you.

It is best to have a consistent health care professional rather than relying on walk-in-clinics.

Your oncologist provides ongoing reports to your family physician while you are receiving treatment and will also provide a summary and recommendations once your treatments are finished. Although there are standard guidelines, there may be some specific recommendations for your follow-up.

Your family physician will contact the oncologist if there are any concerns with your follow-up examination or test results.

Recommended visits

Visit your family doctor every 3-6 months for the first five years. Your doctor will examine you, review your test results, and discuss any concerns you may have.

Continue to see your doctor annually after the first 5 years.

Carcinogenic Embryonic Antigen (CEA)

The CEA is a tumor marker that can be helpful in detecting a recurrence. A rising CEA may indicate a need to do further investigations.

The CEA is a blood test that should be done every 3 months for the first 3 years then every 6 months for the next 2 years. There is no reason to continue beyond this time unless there are other symptoms.

Colonoscopy

Follow-up colonoscopies are important as they may detect polyps or changes inside the bowel that may indicate a recurrence of cancer. You will be referred to a gastroenterologist or your surgeon for a colonoscopy.

It is recommended you have a complete colonoscopy within the first year after your surgery. Repeat colonoscopies are recommended 3- 5 years thereafter, depending on the findings. These recommendations will differ if you have a diagnosed hereditary cancer syndrome.

Imaging & X-rays

Liver imaging is recommended every 6 months for the first three years, then once per year for two more years. This may be an ultrasound or possibly a CT scan.

If you had rectal cancer:

A chest x-ray is also recommended every 6 – 12 months for the first five years.