

Emotional and Psychological Well-being: A Guide for Gynecological Cancer Survivors

What is emotional and psychological well-being?

Emotional and psychological well-being refers to your mental health and overall functioning related to your feelings. Cancer and its treatment can affect your psychological well-being in different ways. Some common issues faced by survivors are feelings of anxiety, fear, stress, and anger.

Fear of cancer coming back

If you fear that your cancer will come back (recurrence), you are not alone. Fear of cancer coming back is one of the most common concerns reported by cancer survivors.

It can start during the transition from cancer treatment to the surveillance period, which can leave some survivors feeling abandoned.

It can generate stress and anxiety due to the uncertainty related to the future and constant worry about monitoring for symptoms that can be a sign of recurrence.

When to talk to a healthcare provider

There are many possible signs of cancer returning. Many of these signs and symptoms can also happen for other reasons other than a cancer recurrence. If you have symptoms that are concerning to you it is important to talk to a healthcare provider to figure out what is causing them.

How to access support:

- Contact your healthcare team. Your healthcare team can evaluate your needs and provide a referral to other professionals who can help.
- Talk to a registered nurse or find health services using [Health811](#) (formerly Telehealth). You can call 811 (TTY: 1-866-797-0007) or use the [online chat](#).
- Find services in your area with the Canadian Cancer Society's [Community Services Locator](#).

Other things you can do

Try mindfulness

Mindfulness and other relaxation techniques can be helpful to cope with the emotional aspects of cancer, such as fear of recurrence, anxiety, depression, or stress.

Find peer support

If you feel comfortable sharing your feelings, a peer support group can provide a safe space to talk about your fears. It can be helpful to hear the experiences of others who may be facing similar issues.

Try reflecting on what you can control

If you have feelings of uncertainty about the future, it can be helpful to realize that there are situations you can control and those you cannot. You may want to try to let go of things you can't control and save your emotional and physical energy for the things that you can control.

Take action

If you experience feelings of anger, it can help to channel these feelings constructively. You could get involved in supporting others, raise funds for research, or participate in other activities that are meaningful and enjoyable to you.

More information

[Life After Primary Gynecological Cancer Treatment: A Guide for Survivors and Caregivers](#) by Queen's University School of Nursing can help you prepare for life after gynecological cancer treatment. It provides information for people who are recovering from cancer and care partners. (Information and resources on emotional and psychological well-being can be found on pg. 15-20 and on pg. 41-43)

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Should you require this information in an accessible format, please contact 1-877-280-8538, TTY 1-800-855-0511, info@ontariohealth.ca.

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