

# Transfer of Care Letter

Testicular Cancer

Patient



[DATE]

Re: Transfer of Care

Dear [ARIA: Insert Name],

You have finished your treatment and follow-up for non-seminoma testicular cancer at the Cancer Centre. Finishing cancer treatment is a time of change. We want you to know that even when you finish your treatments and are no longer being seen at the cancer center, you are not alone! Help and support is available.

There are things you can start or continue to do to manage your health care and improve your well-being. The information in this letter, along with the supports, resources and suggestions in the book [After Treatment: Information and Resources to Help You Set Priorities and Take Action](#), can help prepare you to move forward and live your best.

## Follow-up Appointments and Tests

Since we feel you are doing well, we will use a **Primary Care** model for your follow-up. This means that your primary health care provider (such as your family doctor, cancer care clinician or nurse practitioner) can safely do your non-seminoma testicular cancer follow-up from now on. Your primary health care provider will:

- arrange tests to check for cancer (sometimes called **surveillance**)
- continue to see you for any health conditions you have or any new problems
- refer you back to a specialist or your cancer doctor (oncologist) if they have any concerns

Your testicular cancer follow-up may include:

- A physical exam
- Blood tests
- Chest x-rays
- CT scans

The timing for these tests changes, depending on how long ago your treatment finished. Please talk with your doctor about how often you should have these tests.

**Remember, it is your responsibility to book your follow-up visits with your primary care provider so they can arrange the tests you need.**

## Continue to See Your Primary Health Care Provider

Continue to see your primary health care provider (such as your family doctor, cancer care clinician or nurse practitioner) for your regular health exams and health issues. We will send them a summary of your cancer treatment and cancer related problems for communication purposes.

You will need a family doctor. If you do not have one, you can find one by calling Health Link Alberta (811) or going to: [Find a Doctor](#). Once you have a doctor, let them know they can view the health care provider follow-up recommendations at [www.ahs.ca/guru](http://www.ahs.ca/guru).

## Manage Side Effects from Treatment

Most side effects will get better over the next several weeks and months, but it is important to tell your care team about any side effects or emotional concerns so they can help you. The [After Treatment](#) book has suggestions for managing common side effects. If you need more information, your Cancer Centre has detailed patient education materials for many different side effects.

Your cancer treatment may have side effects. These depend on the type of treatment you had.

Type of Treatment	Possible side effects
Removal of 1 testicle, no other treatment	Your body may not be able to make enough testosterone. This is a rare problem. If you do not have enough testosterone you could have problems getting and keeping an erection and keeping your bones and muscles strong. You may need to take a testosterone supplement. <b>Taking testosterone supplements does not increase the risk of testicular cancer coming back.</b>
Removal of both testicles, no other treatment	You will not be able to have children naturally. If you had sperm stored before your treatment, talk with your doctor about your options for having children.  Your body will not be able to make enough testosterone. If you do not have enough testosterone you could have problems getting and keeping an erection and keeping your bones and muscles strong. You may need to take a testosterone supplement. <b>Taking testosterone supplements does not increase the risk of testicular cancer coming back.</b>
Surgery to remove lymph nodes in your abdomen (retroperitoneal lymph node dissection or RPLND)	You may have difficulty having children naturally. This is because the surgery can damage the nerves that control the release of sperm. If you are trying to have children, talk with your doctor. You may be referred to a specialist.
Chemotherapy Treatment	There may be long-term effects depending on the kind of chemotherapy you had. For example, Bleomycin can cause lung problems (especially if you smoke) or have kidney problems. Cisplatin can affect your hearing and cause numbness or tingling in your hands and feet.  Chemotherapy side effects usually get better in the weeks and months following treatment.
Radiation Treatment	You may have experienced nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. Radiation side effects usually get better in the weeks following treatment.

**Be sure to tell your doctor about any side effects, concerns or worries. They will be able to help you manage them.**

## Know the Signs and Symptoms of Testicular Cancer Recurrence

Review the list of general symptoms to watch for in the [After Treatment](#) book. Below are some symptoms specific to testicular cancer. If these symptoms start and do not go away, tell your oncology team right away. They may do tests to see if the cancer has come back or refer you back to the Cancer Centre.

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AHS ONC TRANSFER OF CARE-NON-SEMINOMA-PATIENT**

- Swelling or a new lump in your remaining testicle
- Swelling or lumps in your armpits or neck
- Swelling in one or both of your breasts
- Night sweats
- A new feeling of significant fatigue or a tired feeling that won't go away

## Support and General Recommendations

As you move forward, you may have questions about what is next, what you should do to take care of yourself, or how to improve your well-being. We hope that along with your care team, the [After Treatment](#) book will help you during this time of change, answer your questions, and give you the information and supports you need.

### Recommended Resources:

- [After Treatment: Information and Resources to Help You Set Priorities and Take Action](#) (book) — the oncology care team will give you this book at the end of your treatment

### Counselling and Support:

Many patients find counselling services or support groups helpful when adjusting to life after cancer. They can help with things such as communication, stress management, coping with treatment side effects, mood changes, quality of life, body image, sexual health, or loneliness. If you would like to set up a counselling appointment, please pick the closest location from the list below and call to make an appointment:

Calgary: 587-231-3570	Lethbridge: 403-388-6814	Other Communities visit <a href="http://www.ahs.ca/cpn">www.ahs.ca/cpn</a> and click: Provincial Cancer Patient Navigation
Edmonton: 780-643-4303	Medicine Hat: 403-529-8817	
Grande Prairie: 825-412-4200	Red Deer: 403-343-4485	

## Healthy Lifestyle Recommendations

You will find recommendations and information on ways to improve your well-being in the [After Treatment](#) book.

## Specific Concerns for Testicular Cancer Patients

### Sexual Health Concerns

Treatment for testicular cancer can impact your sexual function, interest in sex, health, fertility, relationships, and cause distress. There are things you can do to help manage physical concerns, such as erectile dysfunction and strategies and support are also available to help you and your partner with intimacy problems, distress, and adjusting to these changes. See the Counselling and Support numbers listed in the section above or contact the **Oncology and Sexuality, Intimacy, and Survivorship** (OASIS) program at 780-391-7664.

Resources for low sexual desire and men's sexual health (such as erectile dysfunction) are available at your Cancer Centre or online at [www.myhealth.alberta.ca](http://www.myhealth.alberta.ca) (search "cancer and sexuality").

### **Scuba Diving**

If you had Bleomycin chemotherapy, there could be a risk if you go scuba diving. Research has not shown strong evidence to suggest that scuba diving is either safe or unsafe. Talk to your primary care provider if you had this chemotherapy and want to go scuba diving.

### **Ongoing Care**

If there are any concerns about your cancer returning, your family doctor will connect you back to us.

Sincerely,

**Your Genitourinary Oncology Care Team**

SAMPLE