

# Transfer of Care Letter

Tumour Team

Physician



[DATE]

Re: Transfer of Care

Dear Dr. [Insert Physician Name],

Your patient [Insert Patient Name] has received treatment(s) for cancer at the Cancer Centre and is now being **transitioned** back to you for ongoing cancer surveillance in addition to their regular care.

**Your patient is in [Insert Year] year of their follow up surveillance.**

The evidence-based recommendations outlined below outline the standard follow-up procedures for cancer surveillance, and are intended to assist you in providing optimal cancer follow-up care for your patient; these recommendations are not intended to be a substitute for clinical judgment

## Surveillance for Cancer Recurrence

The frequency of surveillance appointments depends on the type and stage of the cancer and the patient's individual situation. As part of the minimum recommended follow-up, this may include: periodic clinical exams, blood tests such as CBC, imaging such as X-ray, CT-scans, ultrasound, or mammography, and regular preventative age-appropriate health screening (i.e., Pap smear, clinical breast examinations, blood sugars). For more information, please contact the referring oncologist or oncology treatment team.

**Please be aware of these potential symptoms of cancer recurrence:**

- Rapidly enlarging lymph nodes
- Unexplained weight loss with or without loss of appetite
- Unexplained fevers
- New persistent bone pain
- New persistent cough or dyspnea
- Drenching night sweats
- CBC abnormalities or rising LDH
- New persistent headache or new concerning neurologic deficits

Please follow-up with the referring oncologist or oncology treatment team for specific symptoms and signs of cancer recurrence to watch for in your patient.

**Patients presenting with any symptoms or signs of recurrence should be investigated and referred back to the treating oncologist.**

## Complications and Late Effects of Cancer Treatment

The table below outlines some other common general complications of cancer treatment:

Complication	Actions
Fatigue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fatigue should start to improve within months of treatment completion.</li> <li>Persistent or recurrent fatigue warrants further work-up to rule out other potential causes.</li> <li>For more information please refer to the <a href="#">Cancer-Related Fatigue Guideline</a>.</li> <li>Consider referral to Alberta Cancer Exercise Program (<a href="http://www.albertacancerexercise.com">www.albertacancerexercise.com</a>)</li> </ul>
Lymphedema	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early symptoms include discomfort at lymph node removal site and may be present with/without overt swelling.</li> <li>Refer to local rehabilitation therapy services (e.g. physiotherapy) or a rehabilitation oncology clinic (Calgary: 403-476-2910/ Edmonton: 780-432-8710).</li> </ul>
Peripheral Neuropathy	Peripheral neuropathy should improve over months. Patients may present with tingling and numbness, pain or discomfort, or decreased hot/cold sensation.
Psychosocial distress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing helplessness /hopelessness, distress, anxiety or depression may be present.</li> <li>Patients experiencing these symptoms should be encouraged to inform their oncology treatment team for appropriate psychosocial referral.</li> </ul>
Weight loss	Monitor patients who are at risk and refer to a registered dietician as necessary.
Fertility /Sexual dysfunction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some patients may experience sexual or fertility problems following cancer treatment.</li> <li>The Oncology and Sexuality, Intimacy, and Survivorship (OASIS) program assists patients to manage physical and emotional concerns. To refer patients to the OASIS program, contact:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Calgary and Southern Alberta - 403-355-3246</li> <li>Edmonton and Northern Alberta - 780-432-8260</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Patient Support and General Recommendations

Your patient has received an [After Treatment](#) book and the [Newly Diagnosed](#) book with resources to help.

**Counselling and Support:** If you feel your patient would benefit from social, psychological or spiritual counselling, resources are available from the following sources (Community Cancer Centre patients should call the nearest Associate or Tertiary site):

Calgary: 403-355-3207	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:

Your patient is encouraged to lead a healthy lifestyle. Visit [Cancer Care Alberta's supportive care and living well](#) website or the [After Treatment](#) book for more information.

Here are some evidence informed recommendations about modifiable lifestyle factors for your information:

Modifiable Lifestyle Factor	Recommendations
Body Weight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Body mass index (BMI): 18.5-25 kg/m<sup>2</sup></li> <li>• Waist circumference: less than 80 cm for women / less than 94 cm for men.</li> </ul>
Physical Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try to be active for 2.5 hours (150 minutes) every week.</li> <li>• Spread out exercise throughout the day and week, such as 30 minutes 5 days a week.</li> <li>• Focus on moderate (brisk walking) to vigorous activity (jogging).</li> </ul>
Nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid sugary drinks and foods.</li> <li>• Eat a variety of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and legumes.</li> <li>• Limit consumption of red meats (such as beef, pork, and lamb), and avoid processed meats.</li> <li>• Limit consumption of salty foods and foods processed with salt.</li> </ul>
Dietary Supplements/ Bone Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vitamin D: 1000 - 2000 IU per day.</li> <li>• Calcium: 1000 mg per day (from all sources).</li> <li>• Treatment and follow up as per Canadian Osteoporosis Guidelines.</li> </ul>
Alcohol	Limit alcohol consumption (<1 drink/day, <3 drinks/week).
Smoking	Practice smoking cessation. For help contact Alberta Quits 1-877-710-QUIT (7848) or visit <a href="http://www.albertaquits.ca">www.albertaquits.ca</a> and <a href="http://www.ahs.ca/guru">www.ahs.ca/guru</a> for the clinical practice guideline.
Sun Exposure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advise on avoidance of excessive or potentially harmful UV exposure.</li> <li>• Advocate for the use of sunscreen and sunglasses.</li> <li>• Advise against the use of indoor tanning beds.</li> <li>• Check skin regularly for suspicious lesion.</li> </ul>
Immunizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual non-live influenza vaccination unless contraindicated.</li> <li>• Other vaccinations as appropriate.</li> </ul>
Other cancer screening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age-appropriate screening such as breast, colorectal and other cancers.</li> <li>• Refer to <a href="http://www.screeningforlife.ca/healthcare-providers-resources/">www.screeningforlife.ca/healthcare-providers-resources/</a> for more information.</li> </ul>

## Physician Support

The following resources provide support and information for physicians:

- Primary Health Care Resource Centre:  
<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/info/page11929.aspx>
- Specialist Link (Calgary/Southern Alberta): <https://www.specialistlink.ca/>
- ConnectMD (Edmonton/Northern Alberta): <https://www.pcnconnectmd.com/>
- Treatment and follow up guidelines:  
<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/info/cancerguidelines.aspx>

At any time if you have any concerns or are in need of more information please call the **referring oncologist at [Insert Contact Number]**.

We appreciate your partnership in caring for this patient.