

Transfer of Care Letter

Rectal Cancer

Patient



[DATE]

Re: Transfer of Care

Your surgical date was: [ARIA: Insert]

Dear [ARIA: Insert Name],

You have finished your therapy for rectal cancer at the cancer centre. Follow-up tests are recommended and will be managed by your primary health care provider (family doctor or nurse practitioner). Your surgeon should notify you and your primary health care provider if they will assist with any of the recommended rectal cancer follow-up. If you require additional follow-up with your surgeon, please contact their office.

Follow-up Appointments and Tests

Your primary health care provider will be in charge of your recommended follow-up:

- 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 to a specialist or back to your cancer doctor (oncologist) if they have any concerns

Schedule of Tests for Rectal Cancer Surveillance

Test	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
CEA blood test*	every 3-6 months	every 3-6 months	every 3-6 months	every 6 months	every 6 months
CT scan**	√	√	√(optional)		
Colonoscopy**	√	Every 3 to 5 years as recommended by your endoscopist			

* CEA = carcinoembryonic antigen tumour marker

**CT scans (chest, abdomen, pelvis) and colonoscopies are performed around the anniversary date of your surgery

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

If you need a family doctor, you can find one by calling Health Link Alberta (811) or going to: <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/info/Page13253.aspx>. Once you have a doctor, let them know they can view the health care provider follow-up recommendations at 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 primary health care provider 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.

Know the Signs and Symptoms of Rectal Cancer Recurrence

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

- Persistent and or worsening abdominal pain
- Worsening fatigue
- Nausea or unexplained weight loss
- Dry cough
- Pelvic pain, change in urinary/bowel habits, or pain radiating down your buttocks and legs

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

Support and General Recommendations

There are things you can start or continue to do to manage your health care and improve your well-being. The information and resources listed below can help prepare you to move forward and live your best.

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
 - www.cancercarealberta.ca > Patients and Families > After Treatment
- [Newly Diagnosed](#) (book) - has information on resources to help
 - www.cancercarealberta.ca > Patients and Families > Just Diagnosed > Newly Diagnosed with Cancer
- Cancer Care Alberta: www.cancercarealberta.ca

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:

**Rectal Cancer Transfer of Care Letter – Patient
AHS ONC TRANSFER OF CARE-RECTAL-PATIENT**

Calgary: 403-355-3207	Lethbridge: 403-388-6814	Other Communities visit www.ahs.ca/cpn 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	

We wish you the best for the future as you now return to your primary care provider for follow up care.

Sincerely,

The Alberta Provincial Gastrointestinal Oncology Tumour Team

SAMPLE