Cancer Care Alberta

Guidance & Resource Unit

High-Risk GIST: Patient Transfer of Care Letter

Sarcoma Tumour Team

Version 1.2026

October 13, 2026

[DATE]

Re: Transfer of Care

Dear [ARIA: Insert Name],

You have finished your treatment and follow-up for gastrointestinal stromal tumour at the Cancer Centre. Finishing cancer treatment is a time of change. We want you to know that even when you finish your treatment(s) and are no longer being seen at the cancer centre regularly, 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 (family doctor or nurse practitioner) can safely do your 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

For your gastrointestinal stromal tumour follow up:

- A yearly scan (CT or MRI) of your abdominal and/or pelvic area for 5-10 years after diagnosis

The full schedule of gastrointestinal stromal tumour surveillance can be found in the Follow-Up and Surveillance of Sarcoma guideline.

The timing for these tests changes, depending on how long ago your treatment finished. Your oncology team will let your primary health care provider know.

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 or nurse practitioner) for your regular health exams. We will send them a summary of your cancer treatment and follow-up recommendations, so they are aware of what to do for follow-up.

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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.

Managing 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.

Know the Signs and Symptoms of Cancer Recurrence

Please be aware of these potential symptoms of cancer recurrence:

- Development of a new, unexplained mass in or adjacent to the prior surgical site
- New onset of pain or swelling in the region of previous surgery without a clear cause
- Unintentional weight loss and/or reduced appetite, including early satiety
- Abdominal discomfort or pain
- Bloating or a sensation of abdominal fullness
- Nausea or vomiting
- Occult or overt gastrointestinal bleeding

Review the list of general symptoms to watch for in the After Treatment book. 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.

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
  - 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
- Wellspring
  - https://wellspringalberta.ca/; 1-866-682-3135 (Toll free)
- Canadian Cancer Society

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- Community Service Locator (find local resources); https://csl.cancer.ca/en
- Talk to an information specialist; https://action.cancer.ca/en/living-with-cancer/how-we-can-help/talk-to-an-information-specialist
- Connect with an online community of survivors and caregivers; https://cancerconnection.ca/home

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 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	

Healthy Lifestyle Recommendations

You are 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.

Ongoing Care

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

Sincerely,

Your Sarcoma Cancer Care Team

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