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After Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma Treatment

Get information about how to live well after non-Hodgkin lymphoma treatment and make decisions about next steps.

Living as a Cancer Survivor

For many people, cancer treatment often raises questions about next steps as a survivor.

- [Living as a Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma Survivor](#)
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Living as a Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma Survivor

For many people with non-Hodgkin lymphoma, treatment can destroy the lymphoma. Completing treatment can be both stressful and exciting. You may be relieved to finish treatment, but you might find it hard not to worry about the lymphoma coming back. (If cancer comes back after treatment, it is called **recurrence**.) If you've had cancer, it is very common to worry about this.

For some people, the lymphoma may [never go away completely](#)¹. These people may get regular treatments with chemo, radiation, or other therapies to help keep the lymphoma in check and to help relieve symptoms for as long as possible. Learning to

live with lymphoma that doesn't go away can be difficult and very stressful.

- [Follow-up care](#)
- [Keeping health insurance and copies of your medical records](#)
- [Can I lower my risk of the lymphoma progressing or coming back?](#)
- [If the lymphoma comes back](#)

possible for a person to develop leukemia a few years after being treated for lymphoma.

Ask your doctor for a survivorship care plan

Talk with your doctor about developing a survivorship care plan for you. This plan might include:

- A schedule for follow-up exams and other tests you might need in the future, such as early detection (screening) tests for other types of cancer, or tests to look for long-term health effects from your cancer or its treatment
- A list of possible late or long-term side effects from your treatment, including what to watch for and when you should contact your doctor
- Diet and physical activity suggestions

Keeping health insurance and copies of your medical records

Even after treatment, it's very important to keep health insurance. Tests and doctor visits can cost a lot, and even though no one wants to think of their cancer coming back, this could happen.

At some point after your treatment, you might find yourself seeing a new doctor who doesn't know about your medical history. It's important to keep copies of your medical records to give your new doctor the details of your diagnosis and treatment. Learn more in [Keeping Copies of Important Medical Records](#)⁵.

Can I lower my risk of the lymphoma progressing or coming back?

If you have (or have had) lymphoma, you probably want to know if there are things you can do that might lower your risk of the lymphoma growing or coming back, such as exercising, eating a certain type of diet, or taking nutritional supplements. Unfortunately, it's not yet clear if there are things you can do that will help.

Adopting healthy behaviors, such as [not smoking](#)⁶, [eating well](#)⁷, [getting regular physical activity](#)⁸, and [staying at a healthy weight](#)⁹, might help, but no one knows for sure. However, we do know that these types of changes can have positive effects on your health that can extend beyond your risk of lymphoma or other cancers.

About dietary supplements

treated before age 30. [The risk of mesothelioma](#)²⁷, a rare cancer of the outer lining of the lung, is also increased in those who were treated with chest radiation.

Because women who were treated with chest radiation have an increased risk of breast cancer, the American Cancer Society recommends yearly breast MRIs in addition to mammograms and clinical breast exams beginning at age 30 for these women.

Other than this, most experts don't recommend any additional testing to look for second cancers in people who've had non-Hodgkin lymphoma. Still, it's important to let your doctor know about any new symptoms or problems you have, because they could be caused by the lymphoma coming back, or by a new disease or second cancer.

Like other people, lymphoma survivors should follow the [American Cancer Society guidelines for the early detection of cancer](#)²⁸ and [stay away from tobacco products](#)²⁹, which increase the risk of many types of cancers.

To help maintain good health, people who've had lymphoma should also:

- Get to and stay at a healthy weight.
- Stay physically active, and limit time spent sitting or lying down.
- Follow a healthy eating pattern that includes plenty of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, and that limits or avoids red and processed meats, sugary drinks, and highly processed foods.
- Avoid or limit alcohol. If you do drink, men should have no more than 2 drinks per day and women should have no more than 1 drink per day.

These steps may also lower the risk of some other health problems.

See [Second Cancers](#)³⁰ for more information about causes of second cancers.

Getting emotional support

Some amount of feeling depressed, anxious, or worried is normal when you've experienced lymphoma in your life. Some people are affected more than others. But everyone can benefit from help and support from other people, whether friends and family, religious groups, support groups, professional counselors, or others. Learn more in [Life After Cancer](#)³¹.

Hyperlinks

1. www.cancer.org/cancer/survivorship/long-term-health-concerns/cancer-as-a-chronic-illness.html
 2. www.cancer.org/cancer/types/non-hodgkin-lymphoma/treating.html
 3. www.cancer.org/cancer/managing-cancer/side-effects.html
 4. www.cancer.org/cancer/types/myelodysplastic-syndrome.html
 5. www.cancer.org/cancer/survivorship/long-term-health-concerns/keeping-copies-of-important-medical-records.html
 6. www.cancer.org/cancer/risk-prevention/tobacco.html
 7. www.cancer.org/cancer/risk-prevention/diet-physical-activity/eat-healthy.html
 8. www.cancer.org/cancer/risk-prevention/diet-physical-activity/get-active.html
 9. www.cancer.org/cancer/risk-prevention/diet-physical-activity/take-control-your-weight.html
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- [early-detection-of-cancer.html](#)
29. www.cancer.org/cancer/risk-prevention/tobacco.html
30. www.cancer.org/cancer/survivorship/long-term-health-concerns/second-cancers-in-adults.html
31. www.cancer.org/cancer/survivorship/be-healthy-after-treatment/life-after-cancer.html

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