

## KEEPING AND ORGANIZING IMPORTANT RECORDS

### AFTER MY CANCER TREATMENT IS OVER, WHAT KINDS OF MEDICAL RECORDS AND INFORMATION SHOULD I KEEP?

It is important for people to keep a copy of their cancer treatment records. Ideally, this should include a comprehensive care summary and follow-up plan from your doctor. Patients may not always see the same doctor for their follow-up care, so having this information available to share with another doctor can be helpful. Patients usually have to sign a release for medical records in order to obtain the copy or allow another person to receive them. Sometimes, charges may apply for copying, administrative time to prepare, etc.

You may want to keep track of the following types of information:

- Results of any diagnostic test
- Specific type of cancer (diagnosis)
- Date(s) of cancer diagnosis
- Details of all cancer treatment including the places and dates where treatment was received (for example, type and dates of all surgeries; names and doses of all drugs; sites and total amounts of radiation therapy).
- Contact information for all doctors and other health professionals involved in treatment and follow-up care
- Side effects and complications that occurred during and after treatment.
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- Supportive care received (for example, pain or nausea medication, emotional support, and nutritional supplements)
- Identifying number and title of clinical trial (research study), if the patient participated in a clinical trial.
- Insurance documents: life insurance, short-term and/or long-term disability insurance, long term care policies, health insurance cards.
- Benefit information
- Appeal applications and results.
- Financial records
- Notes from significant discussions with your health care team including dates and times and actions taken.

### HOW DO I ORGANIZE MY RECORDS?

As a cancer survivor you'll want to organize your medical and insurance information so that you can find what you want easily and so that a trusted family member or friend might access the information on your behalf if necessary. Things to keep in mind:

- Develop your own system that works for you for storing records, whether it's file folders, an expanding file, notebook, or computer files, but keep things organized and in one place.
- Remember to create back-ups, especially when using the computer to store information.
- Entrust a friend or relative with a copy of your important information and passwords for computer files or insurance information access.

For more information, see

[www.fhcrc.org/patient/support/survivorship/resources/#practical](http://www.fhcrc.org/patient/support/survivorship/resources/#practical) for the fact sheet "How to Organize Important Records"

Works cited:

National Cancer Institute Fact sheet 7.48, Follow-up Care After Cancer Treatment: Questions and Answers ([www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov))

Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center Health Links

([www.fhcrc.org/patient/support/survivorship/resources/](http://www.fhcrc.org/patient/support/survivorship/resources/))