



After Endometrial Cancer Treatment

Living as a Cancer Survivor

For many people, cancer treatment often leads to questions about the next steps as a survivor or about the chances of the cancer coming back.

- [Living as an Endometrial Cancer Survivor](#)

Cancer Concerns After Treatment

Treatment may remove or destroy the cancer, but it is very common to worry about the risk of developing another cancer.

- [Second Cancers After Endometrial Cancer](#)

Living as an Endometrial Cancer Survivor

For many women with endometrial cancer, treatment may remove or destroy the cancer. Completing [treatment](#) can be both stressful and exciting. You may be relieved to finish treatment, but find it hard not to worry about cancer coming back. (When cancer comes back after treatment, it is called [recurrence](#).) This is a very common concern in people who have had cancer.

For other women, this cancer may [never go away completely](#). They may get regular treatments with [chemotherapy](#), [radiation therapy](#), or other therapies to try to help keep the cancer in check. Learning to live with cancer that does not go away can be difficult and very stressful.

Follow-up care

When treatment ends, your doctors will still want to watch you closely. It is very important to go to all of your follow-up appointments. During these visits, your doctors will ask questions about any problems you may have and may do exams and lab tests or x-rays and scans to look for signs of cancer or [treatment side effects](#). Almost any cancer treatment can have side effects. Some may last for a few weeks to months, but others can last the rest of your life. This is the time for you to talk to your cancer care team about any changes or problems you notice and any questions or concerns you have.

Doctor visits and tests

Endometrial cancer is most likely to come back within the first few years after treatment, so an important part of your treatment plan is a specific schedule of follow-up visits after treatment is finished. How often you need to be seen depends mostly on what [stage](#) your cancer was.

- Women who had stage IA low-grade endometrioid cancers (grades 1 and 2) may be seen every 6 months for the first year after treatment, and then yearly after that.
- If the cancer was stage IB or II low-grade endometrioid cancers (grades 1 and 2), follow-up visits are every 3 months for the first year, then every 6 months for the next 4 years, and then once a year.
- For women with higher stage or grade cancers (stages III or IV, or cancers that were grade III, including papillary serous, clear cell, or carcinosarcomas), experts recommend visits every 3 months for the first 2 years, every 6 months for the next 3 years, and then yearly after that.

During each follow-up visit, the doctor will do a pelvic exam (using a speculum) and check for any enlarged lymph nodes in the groin area. A Pap test may also be done to look for cancer cells in the upper part of the vagina, near the area where the uterus used to be, but it is no longer recommended as a matter of routine due to the low chance of detecting a recurrence. Sometimes a CA 125 blood test is done as a part of follow-up, but this is also not needed in all patients. The doctor will also ask about any symptoms that might point to cancer recurrence or side effects of treatment. Most endometrial cancer recurrences are found because of symptoms, so it's very important that you tell your doctor exactly how you are feeling.

If your symptoms or the physical exam results suggest the cancer may have come back, imaging tests (such as CT scans or ultrasound studies), a CA 125 blood test, and/or biopsies may be done. Studies of many women with endometrial cancer show

that if no symptoms or physical exam abnormalities are present, routine blood tests and imaging tests are not needed.

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 suggested schedule for follow-up exams and tests
- A list of potential late or long-term side effects from your treatment, including what to watch for and when you should contact your doctor
- A schedule for other tests you might need, such as tests to look for long-term health effects from your cancer or its treatment
- Suggestions for things you can do that might improve your health, including possibly lowering your chances of the cancer coming back

Keeping health insurance and copies of your medical records

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

At some point after your cancer 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](#).

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

After completing treatment for endometrial cancer, you should see your doctor regularly to look for signs the cancer has come back. Experts do not recommend additional testing to look for second cancers in patients without symptoms. Let your doctor know about any new symptoms or problems, because they could be caused by the cancer coming back or by a new disease or second cancer.

Survivors of endometrial cancer should follow the [American Cancer Society guidelines](#)

[for the early detection of cancer](#) and should also [stay away from tobacco products](#). Smoking increases the risk of many cancers, as well as other health problems.

To help maintain good health, survivors should also:

- Get to and stay at a [healthy weight](#)
- Adopt a [physically active lifestyle](#)
- Eat a [healthy diet](#), with an emphasis on plant foods
- Limit [alcohol](#) to no more than 1 drink per day

Taking these steps may also lower the risk of some other cancers.

If the cancer comes back

If cancer does come back at some point, your treatment options will depend on where the cancer is, what treatments you've had before, and your health. Surgery, radiation therapy, chemotherapy, targeted therapy, immunotherapy, or some combination of these might be options. Other types of treatment might also be used to help relieve any symptoms from the cancer. For more on how recurrent cancer is treated, see [Treatment Choices by Stage of Endometrial Cancer](#). For more general information on dealing with a recurrence, you may also want to read [When Your Cancer Comes Back: Cancer Recurrence](#).

Could I get a second cancer after endometrial cancer?

People who've had endometrial cancer can still get other cancers, although most don't get cancer again. Endometrial cancer survivors are at risk for getting some other types of cancer. Learn more in [Second Cancers After Endometrial Cancer](#).

- [References](#)

[See all references for Endometrial Cancer](#)

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Second Cancers After Endometrial Cancer

Endometrial cancer survivors can be affected by a number of health problems, but often their greatest concern is facing cancer again. Cancer that comes back after treatment is called a **recurrence**. But some cancer survivors may develop a new, unrelated cancer later. This is called a **second cancer**.

No matter what type of cancer you have had, it is still possible to get another (new) cancer, even after surviving the first. People who have had endometrial cancer can still get the same types of cancers that other people get. In fact, certain types of cancer and cancer treatments can be linked to a higher risk of certain second cancers.

Survivors of endometrial cancer can get any type of second cancer, but they have an increased risk of:

- [Breast cancer](#)
- [Colon cancer](#)
- [Rectal cancer](#)
- [Small intestine cancer](#)
- [Bladder cancer](#)
- [Vaginal cancer](#)
- [Soft tissue cancer](#)
- [Acute leukemia](#)

Colon and breast cancers are the second cancers most often seen.

The increased risks of acute myeloid leukemia (AML) and cancers of the rectum, bladder, and soft tissue seem to be linked to treatment with radiation. See [Second Cancers in Adults](#) for more information about causes of second cancers.

Follow-up after endometrial cancer treatment

After completing treatment, you should still see your doctor regularly. Report any new symptoms or problems, because they could be caused by the cancer spreading or coming back, or by a new disease or second cancer.

Endometrial cancer survivors should also follow the [American Cancer Society](#)

[guidelines for the early detection of cancer](#), such as those for colorectal, breast, and cervical cancer. Screening tests can find some cancers early, when they are likely to be treated more successfully. For people who have had endometrial cancer, most experts don't recommend any additional testing to look for second cancers unless you have symptoms.

Can I lower my risk of getting a second cancer?

There are steps you can take to lower your risk and stay as healthy as possible. To help maintain good health, endometrial cancer survivors should:

- Try to get to and stay at a [healthy weight](#)
- Stay [physically active](#)
- Eat a [healthy diet](#), with an emphasis on plant foods
- Limit [alcohol](#) to no more than 1 drink per day

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

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

- [References](#)

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