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# After Nasal Cavity and Paranasal Sinus Cancer Treatment

## Living as a Cancer Survivor

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

- [Living as a Nasal Cavity or Paranasal Sinus Cancer Survivor](#)

## Cancer Concerns After Treatment

Treatment may remove or destroy the cancer, but it's very common to have questions about cancer coming back or treatment no longer working.

- [Second Cancers After Nasal Cavity or Paranasal Sinus Cancer](#)
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# Living as a Nasal Cavity or Paranasal Sinus Cancer Survivor

For some people with nasal cavity or paranasal sinus cancer, treatment may remove or destroy the cancer. The end of treatment can be both stressful and exciting. You may be relieved to finish treatment, but yet it's hard not to worry about cancer coming back. This is very common if you've had cancer.

For other people, the [cancer might never go](#)<sup>1</sup> away completely. Some people may get regular [chemotherapy](#)<sup>2</sup>, [targeted therapy](#)<sup>3</sup>, or [other treatments](#)<sup>4</sup> to try and help keep the cancer in check. Learning to live with cancer that does not go away can be difficult and very stressful.

Life after cancer means returning to some familiar things and also making some new choices.

## Follow-up care

If you have completed treatment, your doctors will still want to watch you closely. It's very important to go to all follow-up appointments. People with cancer of the nasal cavity or paranasal sinuses are at risk for developing [recurrences](#)<sup>5</sup>, so they must be observed closely after treatment. Your health care team will discuss which tests should be done and how often based on the [type](#)<sup>6</sup> and initial [stage](#)<sup>7</sup> of your cancer, the type of treatment you received, and the response to that treatment.

Experts typically recommend a doctor's exam at least every 3 months for the first year after treatment. After a year, the exams can occur less often. For someone who was treated with radiation to the neck, blood tests to look at thyroid function may be needed.

The cancer care team will recommend which other tests should be done and how often. [CT](#)<sup>8</sup> or [MRI](#)<sup>9</sup> scans of the head and neck and [other imaging tests](#)<sup>10</sup> may be done shortly after you finish treatment or if new symptoms develop to check for cancer that has come back (recurrence) or for a new tumor.

Almost any cancer treatment can have [side effects](#)<sup>11</sup>. Some may last for a few weeks to several months, but others can last the rest of your life. Don't hesitate to tell your cancer care team about any symptoms or side effects that bother you so they can help you manage them.

If cancer does come back (recur), treatment will depend on the location of the cancer and what treatments you've had before. For more information on how recurrent cancer is treated, see [Treatment Options by Type, Location, and Stage of Nasal Cavity and Paranasal Sinus Cancer](#)<sup>12</sup>. For more general information on dealing with a recurrence, you may also want to see [Understanding Recurrence](#).<sup>13</sup>

## Help for trouble swallowing and nutrition problems

Cancers of the nasal cavity and paranasal sinuses and their treatments can sometimes cause problems such as [trouble swallowing](#)<sup>14</sup>, [dry mouth](#)<sup>15</sup>, or even loss of teeth. This

can make it hard to eat, which can lead to weight loss and weakness from poor nutrition.

Some people may need to adjust what they eat during and after treatment. Some may even need a [feeding tube](#)<sup>16</sup> placed into the stomach for a short time after treatment. A team of doctors and nutritionists can work with you to provide nutritional supplements and information about your individual nutritional needs. This can help you maintain your weight and nutritional intake.

## **Ask your doctor for a survivorship care plan**

Talk with your doctor about developing a [survivorship care plan](#)<sup>17</sup> for you. This plan might include:

- A suggested schedule for follow-up exams and tests
- A schedule for 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
- Reminders to keep your appointments with your primary care provider (PCP), who will monitor your general health care

## **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](#)<sup>18</sup>.

## **Can I lower my risk of the nasal cavity or paranasal sinus cancer progressing or coming back?**

If you have (or have had) nasal cavity or paranasal sinus cancer, you probably want to know if there are things you can do that might lower your risk of the cancer 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](#)<sup>19</sup>, [eating well](#)<sup>20</sup>, [getting regular physical activity](#)<sup>21</sup>, and [staying at a healthy weight](#)<sup>22</sup> 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 nasal cavity or paranasal sinus cancer or other cancers.

### **About dietary supplements**

So far, no [dietary supplements](#)<sup>23</sup> (including vitamins, minerals, and herbal products) have been shown to clearly help lower the risk of nasal cavity or paranasal sinus cancer progressing or coming back. This doesn't mean that no supplements will help, but it's important to know that none have been proven to do so.

Dietary supplements are not regulated like medicines in the United States – they don't have to be proven effective (or even safe) before being sold, although there are limits on what they're allowed to claim they can do. If you're thinking about taking any type of nutritional supplement, talk to your health care team. They can help you decide which ones you can use safely while avoiding those that might be harmful.

### **If the cancer comes back**

If the cancer does recur at some point, your treatment options will depend on where the cancer is located, what treatments you've had before, and your health. For more information on how recurrent cancer is treated, see [Treatment Options by Type, Location, and Stage of Nasal Cavity and Paranasal Sinus Cancer](#)<sup>24</sup>.

For more general information, you may also want to see [Understanding Recurrence](#)<sup>25</sup>.

### **Second cancers after treatment**

People who've had nasal cavity or paranasal sinus cancer can still get other cancers. In fact, nasal cavity or paranasal sinus cancer survivors are at higher risk for getting some other types of cancer. Learn more in [Second Cancers After Nasal Cavity and Paranasal Sinus Cancer](#).

## Getting emotional support

Some amount of feeling depressed, anxious, or worried is normal when cancer is a part of 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](#)<sup>26</sup>.

## Hyperlinks

1. [www.cancer.org/treatment/survivorship-during-and-after-treatment/when-cancer-doesnt-go-away.html](http://www.cancer.org/treatment/survivorship-during-and-after-treatment/when-cancer-doesnt-go-away.html)
2. [www.cancer.org/cancer/nasal-cavity-and-paranasal-sinus-cancer/treating/chemotherapy.html](http://www.cancer.org/cancer/nasal-cavity-and-paranasal-sinus-cancer/treating/chemotherapy.html)
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6. [www.cancer.org/cancer/nasal-cavity-and-paranasal-sinus-cancer/about/what-is-nasal-paranasal.html](http://www.cancer.org/cancer/nasal-cavity-and-paranasal-sinus-cancer/about/what-is-nasal-paranasal.html)
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8. [www.cancer.org/treatment/understanding-your-diagnosis/tests/ct-scan-for-cancer.html](http://www.cancer.org/treatment/understanding-your-diagnosis/tests/ct-scan-for-cancer.html)
9. [www.cancer.org/treatment/understanding-your-diagnosis/tests/mri-for-cancer.html](http://www.cancer.org/treatment/understanding-your-diagnosis/tests/mri-for-cancer.html)
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14. [www.cancer.org/treatment/treatments-and-side-effects/physical-side-effects/eating-problems/swallowing-problems.html](http://www.cancer.org/treatment/treatments-and-side-effects/physical-side-effects/eating-problems/swallowing-problems.html)
15. [www.cancer.org/treatment/treatments-and-side-effects/physical-side-effects/mouth-problems/dry-mouth.html](http://www.cancer.org/treatment/treatments-and-side-effects/physical-side-effects/mouth-problems/dry-mouth.html)
16. [www.cancer.org/treatment/treatments-and-side-effects/planning-managing/tubes-lines-ports-catheters.html](http://www.cancer.org/treatment/treatments-and-side-effects/planning-managing/tubes-lines-ports-catheters.html)
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- [care-plans.html](#)
18. [www.cancer.org/treatment/survivorship-during-and-after-treatment/be-healthy-after-treatment/keeping-copies-of-important-medical-records.html](http://www.cancer.org/treatment/survivorship-during-and-after-treatment/be-healthy-after-treatment/keeping-copies-of-important-medical-records.html)
  19. [www.cancer.org/healthy/stay-away-from-tobacco.html](http://www.cancer.org/healthy/stay-away-from-tobacco.html)
  20. [www.cancer.org/healthy/eat-healthy-get-active/eat-healthy.html](http://www.cancer.org/healthy/eat-healthy-get-active/eat-healthy.html)
  21. [www.cancer.org/healthy/eat-healthy-get-active/get-active.html](http://www.cancer.org/healthy/eat-healthy-get-active/get-active.html)
  22. [www.cancer.org/healthy/eat-healthy-get-active/take-control-your-weight.html](http://www.cancer.org/healthy/eat-healthy-get-active/take-control-your-weight.html)
  23. [www.cancer.org/treatment/treatments-and-side-effects/complementary-and-alternative-medicine/dietary-supplements.html](http://www.cancer.org/treatment/treatments-and-side-effects/complementary-and-alternative-medicine/dietary-supplements.html)
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  26. [www.cancer.org/treatment/survivorship-during-and-after-treatment/be-healthy-after-treatment/life-after-cancer.html](http://www.cancer.org/treatment/survivorship-during-and-after-treatment/be-healthy-after-treatment/life-after-cancer.html)

## References

See all references for Nasal Cavity and Paranasal Sinus Cancers

[www.cancer.org/cancer/nasal-cavity-and-paranasal-sinus-cancer/references.html](http://www.cancer.org/cancer/nasal-cavity-and-paranasal-sinus-cancer/references.html)

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# Second Cancers After Nasal Cavity and Paranasal Sinus Cancer

Cancer survivors can be affected by a number of health problems, but often their greatest concern is facing cancer again. If a cancer comes back after treatment it 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.

Being treated for one cancer doesn't mean you can't get another cancer. People who

have had 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 nasal cavity and paranasal sinus cancer can get any second cancer, but they have a higher risk of:

- [Cancers of the mouth and throat](#)<sup>1</sup>
- [Cancer of the larynx \(voice box\)](#)<sup>2</sup>
- [Cancer of the lung](#)<sup>3</sup>
- [Soft-tissue sarcoma](#)<sup>4</sup>

**Most of these cancers are linked to tobacco.**

## Follow-up after treatment

After completing treatment for cancer of the nasal cavity or paranasal sinus, you should still [see your doctor regularly](#). Your doctor may order tests to look for signs that the cancer has come back or spread. These tests are also useful in finding some second cancers, particularly a new lung cancer or cancer of the mouth or throat. Experts don't recommend any other tests to look for second cancers in patients who don't have 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 nasal cavity and paranasal sinus cancer should follow the [American Cancer Society guidelines for the early detection of cancer](#)<sup>5</sup> and [stay away from tobacco products](#)<sup>6</sup>. Smoking increases the risk of getting certain second cancers as well as other health problems.

To help maintain good health, survivors should also:

- Get to and stay at a [healthy weight](#)<sup>7</sup>
- Keep [physically active](#)<sup>8</sup> and limit the time you spend sitting or lying down
- Follow a [healthy eating pattern](#)<sup>9</sup> that includes plenty of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, and limits or avoids red and processed meats, sugary drinks, and highly processed foods
- Not drink [alcohol](#)<sup>10</sup>. If you do drink, have no more than 1 drink per day for women or 2 per day for men

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

See [Second Cancers in Adults](#)<sup>11</sup> for more information about causes of second cancers.

## Hyperlinks

1. [www.cancer.org/cancer/oral-cavity-and-oropharyngeal-cancer.html](http://www.cancer.org/cancer/oral-cavity-and-oropharyngeal-cancer.html)
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3. [www.cancer.org/cancer/lung-cancer.html](http://www.cancer.org/cancer/lung-cancer.html)
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