Esophageal Cancer - Coping with Side Effects [1]

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ON THIS PAGE: You will find out more about steps to take to help cope with physical, social, and emotional side effects. This page includes several links outside of this guide to other sections of this website. To see other pages, use the menu on the side of your screen.

Fear of treatment side effects [3] is common after a diagnosis of cancer, but it may help to know that preventing and controlling side effects is a major focus of your health care team. This is called palliative or supportive care, and it is an important part of the overall treatment plan, regardless of the stage of disease.

Common side effects from each treatment option for esophageal cancer are described in detail within the Treatment [4] section. Learn more about the most common side effects of cancer and different treatments, along with ways to prevent or control them [5]. Side effects depend on a variety of factors, including the cancer?s stage, the length and dosage of treatment(s), and your overall health.

Before treatment begins, talk with your doctor about possible side effects of each type of treatment you will be receiving. Ask which side effects are most likely to happen, when they are likely to occur, and what can be done to prevent or relieve them. And, ask about the level of caregiving you may need during treatment and recovery, as family members and friends often play an important role in the care of a person with esophageal cancer. Learn more about caregiving [6].

In addition to physical side effects, there may be psychosocial (emotional and social) effects as well. Patients and their families are encouraged to share their feelings with a member of their health care team who can help with coping strategies [7]. Learn more about the importance of addressing such needs [8], including concerns about managing the cost of your cancer care [9].

During and after treatment, be sure to tell the health care team about the side effects you experience, even if you feel they are not serious. Sometimes, side effects can last beyond the treatment period, called a long-term side effect. A side effect that occurs months or years after treatment is called a late effect [10]. Treatment of both types of effects is an important part of survivorship care. Learn more by reading the After Treatment [11] section or talking with your doctor.

The next section helps explain medical tests and check-ups needed after finishing cancer treatment. Use the menu on the side of your screen to select After Treatment, or you can select

another section, to continue reading this guide.

Links:
[1] http://www.cancer.net/cancer-types/esophageal-cancer/coping-side-effects
[2] http://www.cancer.net/about-us
[3] http://www.cancer.net/node/24492
[4] http://www.cancer.net/node/18790
[5] http://www.cancer.net/node/25238
[6] http://www.cancer.net/node/25009
[7] http://www.cancer.net/node/21
[8] http://www.cancer.net/node/25010
[9] http://www.cancer.net/node/24865
[10] http://www.cancer.net/node/25396
[11] http://www.cancer.net/node/18793