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Gastrointestinal Stromal Tumor - GIST - After Treatment [1]

This section has been reviewed and approved by the Cancer.Net Editorial Board [2], 12/2014

ON THIS PAGE: You will read about your medical care after treatment is finished and why this follow-up care is important. To see other pages, use the menu on the side of your screen.

Talk with your doctor about developing a follow-up care plan after your initial treatment for a GIST. This plan will include regular physical examinations and medical tests to monitor your recovery over the coming months and years. ASCO offers treatment summary forms [3] to help keep track of the treatment you received and develop a survivorship care plan once treatment is completed.

A person who received treatment for a GIST is typically seen by the doctor every three to six months for up to five years and then once a year after that. This follow-up care is important because there is always a risk that the tumor could come back, even after extensive surgery. For people with metastatic GIST, lifelong treatment is often needed to help control tumor growth.

People recovering from a GIST are encouraged to follow established guidelines for good health, such as maintaining a healthy weight, not smoking, eating a balanced diet, and having recommended cancer screening tests. Talk with your doctor to develop a plan that is best for your needs. Moderate physical activity can help rebuild your strength and energy level. Your doctor can help you create an appropriate exercise plan based upon your needs, physical abilities, and fitness level. Learn more about the next steps to take in survivorship [4], including making positive lifestyle changes [5].

The next section offers a list of questions you may want to ask. Use the menu on the side of your screen to select Questions to Ask the Doctor, or you can select another section, to continue reading this guide.

Links:
[1] http://www.cancer.net/cancer-types/gastrointestinal-stromal-tumor-gist/after-treatment
[2] http://www.cancer.net/about-us
[3] http://www.cancer.net/node/25394
[4] http://www.cancer.net/node/22
[5] http://www.cancer.net/node/24554