

## **Skin Cancer (Non-Melanoma) - After Treatment [1]**

This section has been reviewed and approved by the [Cancer.Net Editorial Board \[2\]](#), 12/2013

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

After treatment for skin cancer ends, talk with your doctor about developing a follow-up care plan. This plan may include regular physical examinations and/or medical tests to monitor your recovery for the coming months and years. An important part of your follow-up care will be regular screening for new skin cancers, which should include whole body skin examinations by a health care professional. This is because many people treated for one skin cancer later develop other skin cancers.

Sun protection and avoiding artificial tanning are essential to help prevent melanoma and other skin cancers. Many people who are treated for skin cancer lead an active, outdoor lifestyle, but it is very important to take steps to protect yourself from further skin damage. Participating in outdoor activities before 10:00 AM or after 4:00 PM and wearing long sleeves, pants, broad-spectrum sunscreen, sunglasses with UV protection, and a wide-brimmed hat will protect against further skin damage. Learn more about [protecting your skin from the sun \[3\]](#).

For most people with skin cancer, surgery removes only a small part of the skin, so there is little need for rehabilitation. However, in some cases, there may be some need for [rehabilitation \[4\]](#) services if surgery was more extensive. People who have surgery, particularly multiple surgeries, on their face may have a substantially altered appearance. Rarely, the eyelid may be altered. The eyelid may not close well, and the person may need to use drops to moisten the eye. In those rare cases when extensive facial surgery is necessary, the person will need support and possibly the help of a caregiver during treatment and recovery. Some of these surgeries are done in several steps and may require prolonged absence from work or other activities.

Rarely, when radiation therapy is used, there is the possibility a second cancer may develop, which may not appear for more than 10 years after treatment. Chemotherapy is used extremely rarely in advanced disease. It is unlikely that the chemotherapy for advanced disease would have common late effects. It is important to note that chemotherapy is not curative for advanced squamous cell carcinoma and is unlikely to cause leukemia.

ASCO offers [cancer treatment summary forms \[5\]](#) to help keep track of the cancer treatment you

received and develop a survivorship care plan once treatment is completed.

People recovering from skin cancer 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](#) [6], including [making positive lifestyle changes](#) [7].

*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.*

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**Links:**

[1] <http://www.cancer.net/cancer-types/skin-cancer-non-melanoma/after-treatment>

[2] <http://www.cancer.net/about-us>

[3] <http://www.cancer.net/node/24659>

[4] <http://www.cancer.net/node/25397>

[5] <http://www.cancer.net/node/25394>

[6] <http://www.cancer.net/node/25400>

[7] <http://www.cancer.net/node/24583>