

How to Manage Your Emotions

It's important to take care of your emotional health during adjuvant treatment for melanoma. This sheet provides tips you might find helpful to understand and manage common feelings. It also explains how to find support.

Recognizing your emotions

After having surgery for melanoma, you may feel relieved, hopeful, and ready to move on. But you may also have some other strong emotions, such as frustration, anger, stress, and anxiety.¹ Sometimes you may experience a lot of emotions at once. Sometimes you may not even know what you are feeling. It is common to experience both these things at the same time. **Taking time to figure out your feelings can help you manage emotions effectively.**²

When you feel overwhelmed by strong emotions, take a moment to ask yourself what you are feeling. What might be causing these feelings?³ There may be things you can do to help you recognize and understand your emotions.



Take a walk to think things through.



Write down what you are feeling.



Talk to your health care team.⁴

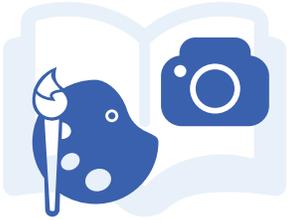
Managing your emotions

"I am frustrated that I still have to take medication after surgery."

Maybe you are upset or frustrated about more treatment after surgery.⁵ You may want treatment to be over finally. You may not want to be reminded of your diagnosis any more. If you feel this way, talk to your doctor. How do the benefits of treatment help with your goals for the future? **Write down what goals adjuvant treatment can help you achieve.** If you are feeling unmotivated, review your goals to remember what you are working towards.

“I am afraid and worried that my cancer will come back.”

Many people worry about cancer coming back. Certain events or experiences may trigger these fears, such as the anniversary of a diagnosis, new symptoms, or follow-up testing. Try to notice what events trigger your fears. That way you can be more prepared to respond.⁵ Here are a few things that may help when you are afraid or worried.⁶



- Find ways to relax, such as reading a book or taking a walk.
- Focus on other things in your life. Keep busy and be as active as you can. Make time for your favorite hobbies and interests.
- Give yourself time—be patient with yourself.⁵

“I feel anxious about my future.”

It is common to experience anxiety about any uncertainty of the future.⁴ There are a few things that may help to manage anxiety:



- Practice mindfulness by focusing on the here and now, instead of replaying the past or worrying about the future. Staying in the present moment can help you relax.⁶
- Stay active through light exercise. Consult with your doctor about the types of exercise you can and can't do—be careful not to overdo it.⁴

Reach out for help

Move forward with the help and support of others.



- Reach out to trusted friends or family members.
- Connect with cancer support groups in your area.
- Ask your doctor, nurse, and health care team for help.
- [Countries insert local resources and provide URLs/links]

You don't have to do it on your own. **Let others be there to help you find support and strength for the journey forward.**

References

1. National Cancer Institute. Coping with cancer: a new normal. <https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/coping/survivorship/new-normal>. Accessed October 16, 2018. 2. Bechtoldt, M.N., et al, 2011. The primacy of perceiving: Emotion recognition buffers negative effects of emotional labor. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 96(5), p.1087. 3. Handler, J.K. (2018) Identify your feelings. *Psychology Today*. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/art-and-science/201801/identifying-your-feelings> Accessed October 21, 2018. 4. National Cancer Institute. (2018). Facing forward: life after cancer treatment, (No. 18-2424). <https://www.cancer.gov/publications/patient-education/life-after-treatment.pdf>. Accessed October 7, 2018. 5. Napolitano, E. (2014). Six tips for managing fear of cancer recurrence. Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. <https://www.mskcc.org/blog/six-tips-managing-fear-recurrence>. Accessed October 7, 2018. 6. Springboard Beyond Cancer (National Cancer Institute and America Cancer Society). Anxiety. <https://survivorship.cancer.gov/springboard/stress-mood/anxiety>. Accessed September 26, 2018.

Insert Patient-Tailored Important
Safety Information Here.



Novartis Pharma AG
CH-4002 Basel Switzerland

© 2018 Novartis

12/18

G-MTA-1202094

