

Transfer of Care Letter

Prostate Cancer

Patient



[DATE]

Re: Transfer of Care

Dear [ARIA: Insert Name],

You have finished your external beam radiation treatment (EBRT) and follow-up for prostate cancer at the Cancer Centre. Finishing cancer treatment is a time of change. We want you to know that even when you finish your treatments and are no longer being seen at the cancer center, you are not alone! Help and support is available.

There are things you can start or continue to do to manage your health care and improve your well-being. The information in this letter, along with the supports, resources and suggestions in the book [After Treatment: Information and Resources to Help You Set Priorities and Take Action](#), can help prepare you to move forward and live your best.

Follow-up Appointments and Tests

Since we feel you are doing well, we will use a **Primary Care** model for your follow-up. This means that your primary health care provider (family doctor or nurse practitioner) can safely do your prostate cancer follow-up from now on. Your primary health care provider will:

- arrange tests to check for cancer (sometimes called **surveillance**)
- continue to see you for any health conditions you have or any new problems
- refer you back to a specialist or your cancer doctor (oncologist) if they have any concerns

For your prostate cancer follow-up we recommend:

- Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) Test
- Review of side effects or other complications from your treatment
- Bone Density Scan every 2-3 years (for men on Androgen Deprivation Therapy only)

The timing for these tests changes, depending on how long ago your treatment finished, but usually it is once per year. Your oncology team will let your primary health care provider know.

Remember, it is your responsibility to book your follow-up visits with your primary care provider so they can arrange the tests you need.

Continue to See Your Primary Health Care Provider

Continue to see your primary health care provider (such as your family doctor or nurse practitioner) for your regular health exams. We will send them a summary of your cancer treatment and follow-up recommendations so they are aware of what to do for follow-up.

If you need a family doctor, you can find one by calling Health Link Alberta (811) or going to: <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/info/Page13253.aspx>. Once you have a doctor, let them know they can view the health care provider follow-up recommendations at www.ahs.ca/guru.

Manage Side Effects from Treatment

Most side effects will get better over the next several weeks and months, but it is important to tell your care team about any side effects or emotional concerns so they can help you. The [After Treatment](#) book has suggestions for managing common side effects. If you need more information, your Cancer Centre has detailed patient education materials for many different side effects.

Side effects specific to radiation treatment to the prostate can include:

- Feeling like you need to urinate often
- Blood in your urine
- Blood in your stool
- Diarrhea
- Loss of control of your bladder or bowels
- Sexual dysfunction
- Rectal pain

Know the Signs and Symptoms of Prostate Cancer Recurrence

Review the list of general symptoms to watch for in the [After Treatment](#) book. Below are some symptoms specific to prostate cancer. If these symptoms start and do not go away, call your primary care provider right away. They may do tests to see if the cancer has come back or refer you back to the Cancer Centre.

- Swelling or lumps in your armpits, groin/pelvic area or neck
- Bone pain that is new or changing and/or will not go away
- Swelling in the legs
- Unplanned weight loss

Hormone Therapy

Read this section only if you are having **androgen deprivation therapy** (ADT). You and your oncologist will decide together on the type and length of ADT, such as leuprolide (Eligard®) that is right for you. If you are prescribed androgen deprivation therapy:

- Check with your pharmacist to make sure it will not interact with your other medications
- You can get these medications for free at your Cancer Centre Pharmacy. Bring your prescription, or ask your doctor's office to fax refills to your Cancer Centre Pharmacy. If you live out of town, check to see if the Cancer Centre Pharmacy can mail your medication to you.

Androgen deprivation therapy may cause your bones to thin. This is called osteopenia or osteoporosis and it may increase your risk of breaking a bone. We recommend a bone density scan every 2-3 years. Contact your family doctor to schedule one. You can improve your bone health by exercising regularly, getting enough calcium and vitamin D, limiting alcohol, and not smoking. You can find out more about these side effects by visiting www.lifeonadt.com.

Support and General Recommendations

As you move forward, you may have questions about what is next, what you should do to take care of yourself, or how to improve your well-being. We hope that along with your care team, the [After Treatment](#) book will help you during this time of change, answer your questions, and give you the information and supports you need.

Recommended Resources:

- [After Treatment: Information and Resources to Help You Set Priorities and Take Action](#) (book) — the oncology care team will give you this book at the end of your treatment

Counselling and Support:

Many patients find counselling services or support groups helpful when adjusting to life after cancer. They can help with things such as communication, stress management, coping with treatment side effects, mood changes, quality of life, body image, sexual health, or loneliness. If you would like to set up a counselling appointment, please pick the closest location from the list below and call to make an appointment:

Calgary: 403-355-3207	Lethbridge: 403-388-6814	Other Communities visit www.ahs.ca/cpn and click: Provincial Cancer Patient Navigation
Edmonton: 780-643-4303	Medicine Hat: 403-529-8817	
Grande Prairie: 825-412-4200	Red Deer: 403-343-4485	

Healthy Lifestyle Recommendations

You will find recommendations and information on ways to improve your well-being in the [After Treatment](#) book.

Specific Concerns for Prostate Cancer Patients

Sexual Health Concerns

Treatment for prostate cancer can impact your sexual function, health, relationships, and sometimes causes distress over body image. There are things you can do to help manage physical concerns, and strategies and support are also available to help you and your partner with intimacy problems, distress, and adjusting to these changes. See the Counselling and Support numbers listed in the section above or contact the **Oncology and Sexuality, Intimacy, and Survivorship** (OASIS) program:

- Calgary and Southern Alberta – 403-355-3246
- Edmonton and Northern Alberta – 780-432-8260

Resources for low sexual desire and men’s sexual health are available at your Cancer Centre or online at www.myhealth.alberta.ca (search “cancer and sexuality”).

Ongoing Care

If there are any concerns about your cancer returning, your family doctor will connect you back to us.

Sincerely,

Your Genitourinary Oncology Care Team