Living Well After Cancer

The Benefit of Recognizing Late and Long-term Effects of Cancer Treatment

Amy Morgan PA and Debra Loacker, RN
Fred Hutch Cancer Center Survivorship Program

Moving Beyond Cancer to Wellness Symposium June 4th 2022
Late and Long-Term Effects

**Medical Problems:**
- Cardiovascular disease/cardiac failure
- Fatigue
- Pain
- Muscle and joint stiffness, weakness
- Osteoporosis / osteopenia
- Hypothyroidism
- Premature menopause
- Pulmonary function
- Lymphedema
- Urinary incontinence
- Infertility
- Neurologic problems (balance, neuropathy, memory)
- GI (bowels, bloating, acid reflux)
- Dental impairments
- Recurrence
- Increased risk of 2nd cancers
- Metabolic syndrome
- Accelerated aging

**Emotional and Functional Concerns**
- Depression
- Anxiety
- PTSD
- Memory loss
- Restricted social and physical activities
- Fear of recurrence/living with uncertainty
- Sexual dysfunction
- Intimacy/relationship issues
- Distress and worry
- Job loss/Job lock
- Role changes at home
- School concerns
- Insurance problems
- Financial concern or crisis
- Sleep disorders
- Cognitive processing disruption
Case Study

JC 30-year-old male

- **DIAGNOSIS:** Ewing Sarcoma of the lumbar spine. Diagnosed at age 22.
- **CHEMOTHERAPY:** Vincristine, doxorubicin, cyclophosphamide, ifosfamide, etoposide.
- **RADIATION:** Lumbar spine and structures in radiation field
- **SURGERY:** Tumor resection from lumbar spine. Complicated port-a-cath removal

**LONG TERM EFFECTS:**

- **Cardiac:** Doxorubicin associated cardiomyopathy/heart failure.
- **Gastrointestinal:** Nausea, anorexia, weight loss and low BMI. Chronic constipation
- **Musculoskeletal:** Weakened chest muscle. Low back weakness/pain
- **Neurologic:** Neuropathy
- **Psychiatric:** Depression, Anxiety, PTSD
- **Fear of recurrence
- **Self-Identity:** Loss of purpose/college. Loss of athleticism
Cardiac

**WHAT**
- Asymptomatic heart failure. Diagnosed routine ECHO two years after completion.
- Chemotherapy–induced cardiomyopathy
- AHA Stage C (A-D). NYHA functional class 3 (1-4)
- Residual fibrosis

**INTERVENTIONS**
- Advanced Heart Failure Team
- BP medications, Heart failure medications, increasing exercise program
- Yearly ECHO and close follow-up with cardiology

**RESULTS**
- NYHA functional class III->II
- Heart muscle normalized 51% -> 58%
- Daily work outs, increased energy. Pt reported improved stamina over pre-diagnosis
WHAT
- Fasting and food restriction: strategy to manage significant nausea and vomiting from chemotherapy. Continued for years.
- Disordered eating: Loss hunger cues
- Chronic severe constipation- failed bowel agents

INTERVENTION
- Nutritionist
- Mirtazapine
- Dietary strategies for constipation, improved eating, exercise

RESULTS
- Improved appetite.
- Normal stool function. Able to stop constipation meds
- Weight gain. Visible changes in appearance and clothes fitting
Musculoskeletal

- **WHAT**
  - Loss of muscle mass
  - Back pain-aggravated by physical work
  - Weakness in back
  - Identity loss- related to loss of strength and endurance
  - Visual signs of low muscle mass on face and upper body.

- **INTERVENTION:**
  - Regular exercise. Needed to address and work on trauma first

- **RESULTS**
  - Increased motivation, self confidence
  - Decreased depression and anxiety symptoms
Emotional/Functional

WHAT

- Loss of Identity: athlete; exercise
- Depression: caused by loss of identity and self-confidence; low mood and motivation
- Anxiety: health anxiety; fear of recurrence.
  - severe episodes -> physical symptoms; continuous anxiety -> periodic worrying throughout the day
- Insomnia: anxiety prevents falling asleep
- PTSD: cancer treatment and diagnosis traumatic to the patient.
  - lying in bed reminds of hospital bed.
  - hypervigilance (distrust of most people, needs his back against the wall in public),
  - chemo not cleared from body; can often "taste the chemo"
- "Everything that he's dealt with since treatment is because of treatment."
Emotional/Functional

INTERVENTIONS

- Counseling (social work MSW): Cognitive behavioral therapy, trauma and recovery, mindfulness, supportive counseling. Challenging Core Beliefs, Affirmation/Positive Self-Statements.
- Psychiatry: mirtazapine
- Exercise: 5 days/wk. Precursor – addressing trauma
- Nutrition: hunger cues, body image, nutrition education

RESULTS

- Improved sleep, appetite, weight, constipation, energy
- Improved mood, self-confidence and feeling capable
- Rebuild identity. Regain/exceed where he was physically prior to treatment. Excited/optimistic regarding exercise/physical condition
- Imagine potential growth and future
- Increase in mood lately, which he attributes to a consistent exercise regimen over the past couple of weeks. He says he is "excited" and cautiously optimistic regarding new exercise routine. Increase in mood and accomplishment after exercise

- Enrolled in school program he is very excited about!
Care Team

- Primary Care
- Oncologist
- Cardiologist
- Gastroenterologist
- Nutritionist
- Psychiatrist
- Counselor

Procedures
- ECHO
- Pulmonary function testing
- CT and MRI scans
"I FEEL BETTER THAN EVER,
BETTER THAN I DID PRIOR TO
MY CANCER DIAGNOSIS"
Other considerations

- Infertility
- Secondary cancers
  - sarcoma, skin, bladder, heme malignancies
- Osteoporosis
- Radiation effects
Fred Hutch Cancer Center Survivorship Program

WHAT IT IS

HOW TO SCHEDULE
Fred Hutch Cancer Center: Survivorship Clinic

- The mission of the Survivorship clinic is to provide a personalized cancer treatment summary and care plan to promote lifelong health and wellness for cancer survivors and to address persisting symptoms and late effects from their cancer treatment.

- Cancer survivors are best served when they have the support of both primary care and their oncology team after they complete treatment.

- The Survivorship Clinic supports patients as they move from the acute treatment phase into day-to-day living as a cancer survivor, and can help guide health care providers to best meet the needs of cancer survivors.
Who is a survivor?

- National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship (NCCS) definition:
  - Defines someone as a cancer survivor from the time of diagnosis and for the balance of life
  - The mission is to advocate for quality cancer care for all people touched by cancer.
  - [https://www.canceradvocay.org](https://www.canceradvocay.org)
Fred Hutch Survivorship Clinic

- **Patient eligibility**
  - Anyone who has received treatment for a cancer diagnosis, once their treatment has been completed, no matter how when that treatment occurred.
  - May be still receiving maintenance or hormonal therapy
  - May be living with cancer as a chronic condition
  - Any diagnosis, any location of oncology treatment
  - May be referred by Oncologist, primary care provider or self-referred
  - A survivorship consult is billed and reimbursed as a level 5 oncology follow up.
  - Usually covered by insurance and Medicare, but please consult your insurance or patient financial services for more information on your coverage.
Fred Hutch Cancer Center Survivorship

Fred Hutch Cancer Center homepage
https://www.fredhutch.org/en.html

Survivorship program

The Survivorship Clinic video
https://www.seattlecca.org/treatments/survivorship/survivorship-clinic