



PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Transitioning Your Colorectal Cancer Care from MSK to a Primary Care Provider

This information explains how your colorectal cancer care will be transitioned from Memorial Sloan Kettering (MSK) to your local primary care provider. It also answers some frequently asked questions.

At MSK, we have a plan of care for people who have finished treatment for colorectal cancer. This plan is based on your individual needs. You have passed the time when most problems from colorectal cancer happen. As a result, you can start seeing your local primary care provider for your future healthcare needs. This transition may seem scary at first, but we're here to help you.

Initial Follow-up Care

You visited your doctor's clinic for follow-up visits in the early years after your treatment. You may have also seen an advanced practice provider (APP), such as a nurse practitioner (NP) or physician assistant (PA). An APP is a healthcare provider who has the education and training to care for you under the supervision of your doctor.

You may have had visits with more than 1 APP depending on the treatments you received. These visits included physical exams and tests, such as colonoscopies.

Long-term Follow-up Care

Your care at MSK

Your doctor decided when you should be transferred from their clinic to a survivorship clinic. Like your doctor, your survivorship APP examined you and ordered tests. They focused on your long-term physical and psychological needs related to colorectal cancer and its treatment. This included managing side effects of treatment and making sure you were getting all the care you needed.

Transition to your local primary care provider

Now that your colorectal cancer care needs have passed, your care can be transferred from MSK to your local primary care provider. Your APP will send your primary care provider a detailed summary of your care at MSK and copies of your test results. They will also send them any recommendations for future colorectal cancer screenings based on the treatment you received.

Frequently Asked Questions

Will I need any other care for my colorectal cancer?

Yes. You should have routine colonoscopies as recommended by your gastroenterologist.

Can I still have my colonoscopies at MSK?

Yes. You can have your colonoscopies done at MSK or at your local gastroenterologist. We can give you reports of your previous procedures at MSK. We can also send your reports to your local primary care provider and gastroenterologist.

What other care will I need?

Your doctor or APP will tell you if you will need any additional testing for your colorectal cancer surveillance. Follow your primary care provider's recommendation about how often to visit other medical providers for routine cancer screenings. Examples of routine cancer screenings include mammograms (x-rays of your breast) or prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood tests (a blood test to check for prostate tumors).

What other blood tests will I need?

You no longer need blood tests related to your colorectal cancer. Your primary care provider will order tests related to your general health, such as cholesterol screenings. Your care team at MSK will include any other tests you need in the report they send to your primary care provider.

I see other MSK doctors. Can I keep seeing them?

Talk with your MSK doctor and local doctors about planning your care. You can transfer other care you receive at MSK to your primary care provider or specialist in your community. You can also choose to keep seeing your doctors at MSK. Your MSK and local doctors can help you decide what's best for you.

If I have another problem related to colorectal cancer, can I come back to MSK?

Yes. If you have any problems related to colorectal cancer, we want you to come back to MSK. We will give you and your primary care provider contact information to make an appointment. As a returning patient, you can make an appointment by calling 866-316-8529 and asking to be directed to your doctor's office.

If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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