The STAR Program
at the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University
Introduction

Each year, over 12,000 American children are diagnosed with cancer.

Fortunately, recent advances in treatment and supportive care mean that nearly 80% of these children will go on to become adult survivors.

Today there are more than 270,000 survivors in the U.S. and that number is expected to rise.

Survivors of childhood cancers often go on to live full and productive lives, but the treatments they’ve received and the disease itself put them at risk for future medical problems. Thirty years after diagnosis, as many as 68% will have at least one health problem, such as a secondary cancer, thyroid disorder or cardiac dysfunction; and 31% will have multiple complications.
AN OVERVIEW
The STAR Program at the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University was created to address the unique needs of adult survivors of childhood cancers. STAR (Survivors Taking Action & Responsibility) is one of just a few such programs in the country.

STAR has three essential components: comprehensive, state-of-the-art patient care; patient education and research designed to help current and future survivors. Patient care is provided in an adult outpatient facility of the Northwestern Medical Faculty Foundation, the full-time faculty group practice of Northwestern University’s Feinberg School of Medicine.

THE STAR TEAM
Our team of professionals includes skilled and compassionate physicians from the Feinberg School of Medicine who have been selected for their expertise and commitment to patient care. The program is directed by an internal medicine physician and coordinated by a clinical nurse specialist in pediatric oncology. The staff also includes a clinical psychologist with experience in survivorship issues.

When additional expertise is required, the STAR Program refers patients to sub-specialists who can offer the best treatment options. Our experience allows us to detect problems early and intervene promptly to prevent minor medical issues from becoming major ones.

Together, STAR’s team of professionals provides comprehensive, state-of-the-art care and understanding while striving to achieve optimal long-term health for all adult survivors.
SERVICES
The STAR Program provides a wide variety of services that address the specific clinical, emotional and educational needs of adult survivors.

Among the services we offer are:

• An annual physical examination and written summary of the patient’s treatment history (Patients may be seen more frequently when indicated.)
• Regular medical surveillance tests and a detailed explanation of test results
• Consultations with sub-specialists when needed
• Communication with the primary care physician
• Education to help survivors take control of their lives and do their part to stay healthy
• Support for survivors with employment or school issues and assistance with insurance questions
• Emotional support
• The opportunity to meet and network with other survivors

PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIANS
Family physicians are often the first doctors to see adult survivors when they get sick. Although these physicians are an important part of the healthcare team, many of the issues survivors face require the attention of a specialist.

The STAR Program welcomes referrals. We provide unique resources for long-term survivors ensuring that they receive the state-of-the-art care they need.

To learn more about the STAR Program at the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University, please call 312.695.4979 or visit www.cancer.northwestern.edu.