

Welcome to Lurie Cancer Center

If you are facing cancer, you want a comprehensive care team that supports your medical, social and emotional needs, and one that is a leader in the field.

Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University is dedicated to providing compassionate, leading-edge care in a state-of-the-art facility.

We are also committed to scientific discovery, advancing medical knowledge, and training the next generation of clinicians and scientists. Outstanding clinical research complements a full range of prevention, early detection, treatment, rehabilitation and palliative care programs for patients with any type of cancer.

As a new patient at Lurie Cancer Center, you may have questions about what to expect and what resources, support and services are available to you. This guide will help answer those questions and provides quick, easy access to information related to your care.

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Phone: 312.695.0990

TTY: 312.926.6363

Non-urgent messages: Send through
NM MyChart at nm.org/mychart

Who we are



Northwestern Memorial Hospital’s cancer center was founded in 1974 and dedicated in 1991 through an endowment from Ann and Robert H. Lurie. The center was renamed in 1997, when Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University received the prestigious “Comprehensive” designation from National Cancer Institute (NCI).

In 2018, Lurie Cancer Center earned the highest possible rating from NCI — an overall “exceptional” score — on the renewal of its designation.

One of only 50 NCI-designated Comprehensive Cancer Centers in the nation, Lurie Cancer Center is a founding member of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN), an alliance of 28 of the world’s leading cancer centers devoted to improving the quality and effectiveness of cancer care.

Each year, nearly 15,000 new patients with cancer are treated at Lurie Cancer Center and its affiliated hospitals and physician practices. Our patients have access to the most advanced therapies and resources, including more than 300 interventional clinical trials for nearly every type of cancer.

Your healthcare team

Your multidisciplinary team includes providers who specialize in different types of care. They work together to develop the best treatment plan for you. Following is a closer look at who your team may include.

Physicians

An oncologist is a physician who specializes in treating people with cancer.

Medical oncologists specialize in treating people with chemotherapy or other anticancer medications. This physician may also specialize in the diagnosis and treatment of certain types of cancer.

Radiation oncologists specialize in treating people with radiation therapy to shrink or eliminate tumors.

Surgical oncologists perform surgery to remove tumors. Many Lurie Cancer Center surgeons are trained to use specialized instruments or minimally invasive techniques.

Your care team may also include students and physicians in training. As an academic medical center, Northwestern Memorial Hospital is educating tomorrow's leaders to provide quality cancer care. All trainees will identify themselves and are supervised by the faculty.

Medical student: A 3rd or 4th year student at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine who works closely with your medical team. You may also be introduced to students from other schools who are visiting Northwestern Memorial Hospital for specific rotations.

Intern or resident: A physician who has completed medical school and is undergoing additional, specialized training.

Oncology fellow: A physician who has completed residency training and is receiving additional training in a specific subspecialty, such as breast surgery or medical oncology. Fellows work closely with an oncologist.

Advanced practice providers

Advanced practice providers (APPs) are specially trained health professionals – clinical registered nurse practitioners and physician assistants – who help provide medical care and treatment.

Physician assistants (PAs) diagnose and treat illnesses, assist in surgeries, perform physical examinations and procedures, make rounds, and provide counseling and patient education with the supervision of a physician.

Nurse practitioners (NPs) and advanced practice nurses (APNs) are registered nurses with at least a master's degree. They assess patients, make diagnoses, and order and interpret diagnostic tests. In collaboration with a physician, an NP may initiate and manage treatment plans, and prescribe medication.

Your healthcare team (continued)

Nurses

Registered nurses (RNs) serve as liaisons between patients and the rest of the care team. Our nurses have special training in treating patients with cancer. Your nurses will help carry out the treatment plan your oncologist or surgeon creates and will help guide you through treatment. Nurses are often the staff members who respond to patient phone calls during the workday.

At Lurie Cancer Center, nurses have various roles:

Nurse coordinator: Works primarily in the outpatient clinic with physicians, surgeons and APPs. This nurse serves as an educator, advocate, liaison and guide before, during and after treatment, and throughout survivorship. Your coordinator may also assist with home health needs and coordination.

Infusion nurse: Administers chemotherapy and supportive medications. This nurse provides education regarding treatment, potential side effects and symptom management. Your infusion nurse will also assess for side effects and collaborate with your medical oncology team regarding symptom management.

Port draw nurse: Draws blood for testing from an implanted port or peripherally inserted central catheter (PICC) line. This nurse may also give short treatments and/or injections.

Patient care professionals

Numerous additional professionals work together to help ensure you are getting the care you need.

Medical assistants assist you and the care team during appointments in the laboratory, clinic and infusion area. They will escort you to the exam or infusion room and take vital signs.

Phlebotomists draw blood from a vein in the arm for tests ordered by your provider.

Team administrative assistants work alongside clinical team members to address non-clinical needs you may have, including paperwork, referrals, medical records collection and other activities that support your clinic experience.

Research coordinators support the clinical team in identifying and monitoring patients who are eligible for treatments delivered as a clinical trial. The research coordinator ensures compliance with the study criteria and communicates necessary clinical trial information to the team.

Pharmacists prepare immunotherapy, chemotherapy and supportive medications delivered in the clinic. Our pharmacy staff may also provide you with medication education, help you navigate insurance coverage issues, and act as a resource for pharmacy-related questions.

Your healthcare team (continued)

Supportive Oncology services

Patients may be referred to or request a referral to Supportive Oncology. These team members can be reached at the main Lurie Cancer Center phone number.

Social workers provide a spectrum of support resources for individuals and families. Your social worker can offer:

- Support as you work through emotional adjustments to illness and treatment
- Relaxation techniques
- Skills and strategies to help you cope with treatment
- Support for loved ones
- Help for children coping with a family member's illness
- Support for grief and loss
- Connections to resources based on need, including support groups, home care, financial resources (including help with prescription costs), advanced directives, employment rights, vocational rehabilitation, transportation and temporary accommodations in the area

Registered dietitians understand the unique concerns associated with cancer and treatment-related side effects. They assist you in planning a healthy diet during and after your cancer treatment by using methods based on research.

Psychologists work with patients and family members to manage the anxiety, sadness, anger and fatigue that can often accompany a cancer diagnosis.

Psychiatry team provides psychiatric evaluation and treatment to patients in need of additional mental health services.

Fertility preservation coordinators work with Lurie Cancer Center physicians and reproductive specialists to help patients explore the possible impact of cancer treatment on their fertility, understand available treatment options and provide referrals for appropriate fertility preservation interventions.

Coordinators of supportive oncology education provide personalized assistance to patients and families seeking information on diagnosis, treatment options, support groups and clinical trials, and offer appropriate referrals to other information sources.

Palliative Care team

This team provides treatment and methods for relieving symptoms, pain and side effects related to your cancer and treatment, with a goal to improve your quality of life. You may receive this type of care at any stage of illness.

Survivorship

After you have finished your cancer treatment, your follow-up with your clinical team will include survivorship care. This care is part of our comprehensive cancer program at Northwestern Medicine and will help ensure that you remain in the best health after your treatment. For more information about survivorship care for your cancer type, feel free to speak with your clinical team.

Your healthcare decisions

Advance directives are an important part of your health care because they allow you to state what your preferences are for medical decisions. At Lurie Cancer Center, we want to understand your values, beliefs and concerns about your health, illness and dying so that we can provide better care. You should include your family and loved ones in discussions as you prepare advance directives. These documents will guide your family and physicians to make decisions about your care if you are unable to participate in these decisions.

Advance directives do the following:

Document your wishes and preferences.

Ease the decision-making burden on your loved ones.

Allow you to choose someone you trust to make decisions about your care.

Foster peace of mind and sense of control.

Provide guidance in case of sudden accidents or illness, chronic illness and advancing age.

Help you avoid unwanted medical/surgical treatments.

We encourage you to talk about your wishes with people who are important to you.

Openly discuss your wishes with your significant other, family, physician and clergy.

Choose an agent. This is someone with whom you have discussed your wishes, and who is able and willing to represent them.

Discuss your values, beliefs (about health, illness, dying, fears) and wishes with your agent.

Let your significant other and family know how to contact your agent and attorney, if you have one.

Discuss organ donation with your significant other and family.

4 types of advance directives

Power of attorney for healthcare

A power of attorney for healthcare allows you to select a family member, friend or any person you choose to designate as an agent to be your medical decision-maker if you are unable to communicate your wishes. If you do not complete a power of attorney document, your physicians will ask your family for input. In Illinois, a power of attorney document cannot be used for mental health care.

Your healthcare decisions (continued)

Living will

A living will is a document that addresses life-sustaining procedures for patients who are terminally ill. In Illinois, the Living Will Declaration states that you do not want medical treatments that would only prolong the dying process during an end-of-life situation. It tells your healthcare team to focus on keeping you comfortable in your final days.

Physician orders for life-sustaining treatment (POLST)

A POLST form is a medical order that reflects your wishes for healthcare decisions.

Mental health treatment preference declaration

The mental health treatment preference declaration allows you to select a family member or friend to represent your wishes as your mental health decision-maker.

The Health Learning Center offers information about advance directives. Call our complementary advance directive resource at 312.695.1805, TTY 312.926.6363, to discuss or complete the Illinois power of attorney for healthcare form. If you do not complete advance directives and are unable to communicate your wishes, your medical treatment will be decided for you in accordance with the Healthcare Surrogate Act.

Patient services

Safety

At Northwestern Medicine, we care about your safety and security. We will verify your name and date of birth before performing procedures, and may recheck several times throughout your visit.

Any safety concern should be discussed right away with your medical team or a member of our leadership team. In addition, you may visit the Northwestern Medicine Patient Services Center, located on the 2nd floor of Galter Pavilion.

Wheelchairs

Wheelchairs are available near the valet stand at each of the entrances to Northwestern Memorial Hospital pavilions.

Visitor policies

We understand that support of family and friends is important for your healing. However, for the safety of all patients and visitors, we ask that you follow these guidelines:

Visitors who are feeling ill or have recently been exposed to a contagious disease should not visit Lurie Cancer Center.

Children under age 13 may not be in an area where chemotherapy is being given.

Children may be in the waiting area under the supervision of a responsible adult visitor.

Other restrictions (such as flu season precautions) may be posted around the cancer center as warranted.

Wait times

Sometimes, unexpected events may result in longer wait times. Please ask the patient service representative or a volunteer in the waiting room to let you know your expected wait time.

Interpreter services

Please let a patient service representative know if an interpreter is needed for your appointment. We offer video remote interpreting services or in-person interpreters during your clinic visit, as needed. Interpreters are provided at no cost to patients who have limited English proficiency or who have hearing or sight impairments.

Confidentiality

Northwestern Medicine is committed to providing you with the highest quality of care in an environment that protects your privacy and the confidentiality of your health information. Information explaining your rights and privacy is available at patient registration and within NM MyChart, or you may address this with any healthcare provider.

For your protection, in order for family members or friends to receive information regarding your medical condition or to be able to speak with one of your healthcare team members directly, you will need to sign a communication consent form. This document is available at patient registration or can be obtained from any of patient service representative at check-in.

For more information, go to:

nm.org/patients-and-visitors/patient-rights-policies/patient-bill-of-rights

nm.org/patients-and-visitors/patient-rights-policies/consent-to-medical-care

Patient services (continued)

Educational resources

Health Learning Center

The Alberto Culver Health Learning Center is located on the 3rd floor of Galter Pavilion at 251 East Huron Street. It is a full-service library that can help you get the information you need to make the best healthcare decisions. Services are available for both patients and visitors Monday through Friday, 8:30 am to 3:00 pm. **For more information, go to hlc.nm.org.**

Online resources

Having the right information about your medical condition and care is important. We can help you make the best possible healthcare choices by providing disease-specific information and treatment options.

For more information, go to cancer.northwestern.edu.

Northwestern Medicine also offers hundreds of informational brochures that describe a variety of tests, procedures, treatments and follow-up care. **For more information, go to nm.org/patients-and-visitors/patient-education.**

Educational events

Robert H. Lurie Cancer Center offers access to a wide selection of educational events and programs, including Cancer Connections, Gilda's Club activities and more. **For information, go to cancer.northwestern.edu/events.**

Patient Services Center, Northwestern Medical Group

The Patient Services Center is conveniently located on the 2nd floor of Galter Pavilion. The patient liaison provides a full range of services, including help with scheduling, billing, parking, directions, lodging, interpreter services and general information. If you or your family needs help finding Patient Services, call 312.695.1920, TTY for the hearing impaired 312.695.3661.

Pharmacy

For your convenience, an onsite Walgreens pharmacy is located on the 2nd floor of Galter Pavilion. The pharmacy is open from 7 am to 8 pm, Monday through Friday, and 8 am to 4 pm on weekends.

Billing questions

For outpatient billing from Northwestern Medical Group, contact our Account Inquiry Unit at 312.695.9696, TTY for the hearing impaired 312.695.3661.

For inpatient billing at Northwestern Memorial Hospital, call 312.926.6900, TTY for the hearing impaired 312.926.6363.

Financial help

Patients who are unable to pay their medical bills can explore assistance options by contacting Financial Counseling at 312.926.6906, TTY for the hearing impaired 312.695.3661.

Patient services (continued)

Medical records

Medical records is also known as Health Information Management. Patients may request Northwestern Medical Group (outpatient clinic) medical records at 312.695.8642 (TTY: 312.695.3661), and inpatient medical records at 312.926.3248 (TTY: 312.926.6363).

Lodging

Out-of-town patients and visiting family members may be eligible for reduced rates at a variety of nearby hotels. You can view the list of hotels at cancer.northwestern.edu/lodging. Call the hotel directly to ask about room availability with the “Northwestern” discounted rate and to make reservations. Or, click on the hotel’s reservation link, and the “Northwestern” discount rate will be prepopulated.

If more lodging help is needed, call our Health Resources Department at 312.926.ROOM (7666), Monday through Friday, 8 am to 5 pm.

The Chicago branch of American Cancer Society (ACS) also provides temporary lodging for patients and their families during cancer treatment. Many Chicago hotels provide a reduced rate for patients through ACS. Reservations must be made through an ACS representative and should be made at least 5 business days in advance, if possible. Go to cancer.org or call 800.227.2345 to learn more.

Communicating with your healthcare team

Lurie Cancer Center provides comprehensive cancer care, Monday through Friday, in 2 outpatient locations in Chicago.

Robert H. Lurie

Comprehensive Cancer Center

Galter Pavilion

675 North Saint Clair Street, 21st Floor

Clinic hours and call center:

Monday through Friday

8 am to 5 pm

Infusion:

Monday through Friday

7:30 am to 6:30 pm

Saturday options for eligible patients

Maggie Daley Center

for Women's Cancer Care

Prentice Women's Hospital

250 East Superior Street, 4th Floor

Clinic hours and call center:

Monday through Friday

8 am to 5 pm

Infusion:

Monday through Friday

7:30 am to 6:30 pm

**Contact your healthcare team at
312.695.0990, TTY 312.926.6363 .**

If you have a concern or question about your care, our patient services representatives are here to help. The representative will ask for your name, physician and a brief message. They will send your message to a member of your care team, and that person will contact you. For urgent matters, the representative will page the care team.

You must have a scheduled appointment to meet with a member of your healthcare team.

Preparing for your clinic visits

Questions to ask

Many people find it difficult to remember questions when they are with their care team in the exam room. To help make the most of each visit, please write down your questions before your appointment. Consider the following questions as you think about what you'd like to ask

Surgery questions

- What type of surgery/incision will I have?
Is there a minimally invasive option?
- What are the benefits and risks of the procedure?
- Are there other procedure options? If so, what are the benefits and risks?
- How long will the surgery take? How long will I be in the hospital?
- What is the recovery process? Will there be limitations (such as driving, work, food)?
- When and how will I receive surgery results?
- Other questions?

Treatment questions

- What type of cancer do I have? What stage is it? What is the recommended treatment for me? What are the benefits and risks?
- Are there other treatment options? If so, what are the benefits and risks?
- How often will I receive treatment?
- How long will I be in treatment (or watchful waiting)?
- What are the common side effects?
- When should I report side effects?
- How do I deal with side effects?
- Are there any clinical trials available to me?

General questions

- What is the typical course for this disease?
- What are the goals for my care?
- Who is my main contact for questions or concerns?
- How can I reach my physician or nurse during normal working hours, nights and weekends?
- What else do I need to know?