

Cancer Survivorship Institute

Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of
Northwestern University



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ROBERT H. LURIE
COMPREHENSIVE CANCER CENTER
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Introduction

Today more than ever, cancer survivors are leading healthy and fulfilling lives due to the many advances in early detection, diagnosis, and treatment. Long-term effects of cancer and cancer-related therapies, however, require ongoing surveillance. Cancer survivors, therefore, face a number of distinct psychosocial and medical challenges that last well beyond the diagnostic and primary treatment phases.

What is a cancer survivor? The National Coalition of Cancer Survivorship defines individuals as cancer survivors from the time of diagnosis through the rest of their lives. Family, friends, and caregivers of those affected by cancer also are part of the survivorship experience. Although there is abundant literature on how best to deal with medical and psychosocial issues that arise after diagnosis and treatment of cancer, navigating through the flood of information can be extremely daunting. The Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University and its Cancer Survivorship Institute are providing leadership and excellence in research, clinical care, and trusted resources for survivors and their families.

The Cancer Survivorship Institute is exceptionally well-positioned to integrate the best medical care with evidence-based programs that attend to the unique medical, physical, and psychosocial changes and needs that come with cancer survivorship. The Institute's approach centers on patients and provides comprehensive supportive oncology services including psychosocial, rehabilitative, integrative, and palliative care. Our specialized survivorship medical clinics address the unique needs of specific groups of cancer survivors and their families. The Cancer Survivorship Institute is positioning Northwestern Medicine and Lurie Cancer Center as a world leader in cancer survivorship clinical care and research.

Specialty support programs and clinics provide emotional and practical support for patients and their families during all stages of their care—from diagnosis through treatment, recovery, and long-term follow-up. These programs offer practical and supportive information to help survivors cope with the shift in focus from treatment to recovery. And, they support caregivers who are caring for a loved one with cancer. The continuum of support services includes psychosocial support and education during and after completing primary treatment for cancer, care plans that detail future follow-up, monitoring for late side effects of treatment, modifying lifestyle factors that can impact health outcomes, and tools to address physical and emotional concerns.



“Cancer survivors face many challenges that can compromise their quality of life and health outcomes, and these challenges can last well beyond completion of primary treatment. We are firmly committed to managing their unique medical and psychosocial needs with long-term, comprehensive, holistic, and evidence-based approaches guided by clinical research evidence that incorporates knowledge of psychosocial and behavioral factors and their interplay with basic biological mechanisms. We also emphasize translational and community research models that are critical to moving research findings into clinical care and our communities. The Cancer Survivorship Institute integrates these clinical and research efforts seamlessly to improve the lives of cancer survivors, their families, and the community.”

Christine Rini, PhD
Director, Cancer Survivorship Institute
Leader, Cancer Control and Survivorship Research Program
Professor of Medical Social Sciences

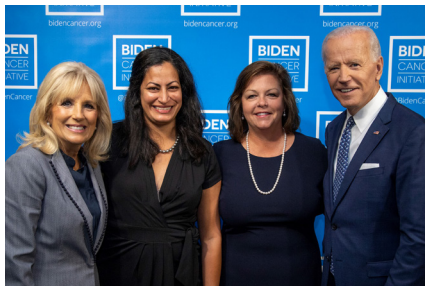
Survivorship Clinics and Programs

Our survivorship clinics engage Supportive Oncology services at Lurie Cancer Center to provide comprehensive care including social work, nutrition counseling, fertility preservation, smoking cessation counseling, financial counseling, psychology, psychiatry, physical therapy, and healthcare system navigation.

The following are examples of tailored and specialized clinics and programs that focus on the unique needs of different demographic groups.

Lynn Sage Breast Cancer and Adult Cancer Survivorship Programs

The Lynn Sage Breast Cancer and Adult Cancer Survivorship Programs offer comprehensive care and management strategies for patients with breast and testicular cancer, lymphoma, and leukemia as they transition to post-treatment survivorship care. These issues include osteoporosis, cardiotoxicity, fatigue, hot flashes, lymphedema, weight gain, depression, anxiety, cognitive impairment, sexual dysfunction, neuropathy, and fertility problems. The program also recognizes and addresses the unique needs of adolescent and young adult (AYA), as well as elderly, survivors.



In 2018, the STAR Program received the inaugural FIERCE Award for Survivorship from the Biden Cancer Initiative, celebrating the program's "transformative impact on the lives of cancer patients."

Survivors Taking Action & Responsibility (STAR) Program

The STAR Program is a comprehensive, long-term follow-up program for adult survivors of pediatric cancer. It follows survivors through adulthood focusing on their special medical and psychological needs. Effective integration between the STAR Programs at Lurie Cancer Center and Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago improves the care offered throughout a survivor's lifetime. In recognition of its achievements, the STAR Program received the 2018 FIERCE Award for Survivorship from the Joseph Biden Initiative.

Northwestern Integrative Medicine Program

Integrative Oncology services that combine conventional and complementary therapies to aid the healing process are provided by the Northwestern Integrative Medicine Program. These therapeutic strategies engage the mind, body, spirit, and community, and they focus on lifestyle choices. Wellness plans may include functional nutrition, traditional Chinese medicine and acupuncture, relaxation, biofeedback, cognitive behavioral therapy, and massage therapies.

Cancer Survivorship Research

As part of our National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive cancer center, the Cancer Control and Survivorship Research Program is committed to research that identifies the most successful paths to ensure best outcomes for patients. The program brings faculty members from across Northwestern University together to focus on secondary cancer control, survivorship quality of life, state-of-the-art assessment of patient-reported outcomes, and the palliation of cancer-related physical and psychosocial symptom burden. The following are examples of tailored and specialized clinics and programs that focus on the unique needs of different demographic groups.

Cancer Control and Survivorship Program

The program targets three thematic areas to: 1) measure, analyze, and interpret measures of patient-reported symptoms, functioning, needs, and care experiences; 2) understand and improve cancer survivorship; and 3) manage survivors' symptoms with supportive care. Our areas of research investigation include studies of the interactions among environmental, behavioral, psychosocial, neuroendocrine, immunological, neurobiological, and genetic factors in cancer survivorship. We also are examining associated psychosocial and physical effects on patients, families, and the community. Combining clinical care and biobehavioral oncology research provides ideal translational knowledge to enhance the survivorship experience. Many of our studies use community-engaged approaches to deliver psychosocial interventions to improve quality of life in survivors. Our work also seeks to understand biological mechanisms underlying associations between behavior and health outcomes.



Supportive Oncology Program and Specialty Clinics

The Supportive Oncology Program and Specialty Clinics work directly with clinical researchers who are members of the Cancer Control and Survivorship Program and facilitate studies, such as clinical trials aimed at improving health outcomes in cancer survivors.

Translational Research Program

The Translational Research Program within the Cancer Survivorship Institute aims to implement patient-centered outcomes research in close collaboration with our clinics. Innovative programs are using new technologies to deliver stress and symptom management interventions to provide treatment at the patient's home.



Community-Engaged Survivorship

This research is aimed at eliminating health disparities among low-income, medically underserved survivors across the lifespan. It integrates health services research with social epidemiologic models and tests interventions, such as patient navigation and community health outreach workers, that seek to reduce and eliminate health disparities. Within this context, culture and community are leveraged. Consistent with the mission of the Institute and our Cancer Control and Survivorship Research Program, organizations such as the Coleman Foundation and the Lynn Sage Cancer Research Foundation have made these efforts a priority. Our faculty are actively engaged in collaborations with Chicagoland community organizations and hospitals.

Please Join Us in Supporting Our Urgent Work

Lurie Cancer Center and its Cancer Survivorship Institute are committed to integrating research-based therapies and a continuum of care for its patients and their families to help turn the life-changing trials of dealing with cancer into something positive. We offer hope and inspiration that there is truly life after cancer.

The Cancer Survivorship Institute seeks philanthropic support from donors and friends who believe in its noble mission and want to accelerate its impact. Incredible work already is taking place at the Cancer Survivorship Institute, and the partnership of generous donors will be a catalyst for more success. By investing in our vision and daily efforts, you will help to accelerate the work of our devoted team and propel research advances that improve and enrich the lives of cancer survivors today and in the future.



Learn more about Lurie Cancer Center's patient care, services and programs, research and education, clinical trials, and faculty at cancer.northwestern.edu.