



TORRANCE MEMORIAL

CANCER SURVIVORSHIP PROGRAM

A PARTNER WITH THE UCLA-LIVESTRONG™ CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

BREAST CANCER SURVIVOR PROGRAM PERSISTENT PAIN

- Most breast cancer patients expect to experience some pain during the first few days or week immediately after breast surgery. Some patients develop chronic pain, or Post Breast Therapy Pain Syndrome, i.e., pain that persists for months or years after treatment has ended.
- In addition to breast and lymph node surgery, radiation therapy to the breast or chest wall can cause chronic pain.
- Chronic pain can be constant, or wax and wane. It can be mild, moderate or severe, and the intensity can vary depending on physical activity and emotional state.
- Unrelieved chronic pain can have a profoundly negative impact on quality of life but it does not indicate cancer recurrence.
- Interventions for mild pain include acetaminophen (Tylenol®, others) or a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory e.g., ibuprofen, Motrin®, Aleve®, others.
- More severe pain can be relieved with the addition of stronger prescription pain medication. In addition, medications for other medical conditions, like anti-seizure medications or antidepressants, can also be quite effective in controlling chronic pain.
- Other ways to control chronic pain include relaxation and distraction techniques, hypnosis and biofeedback, acupuncture or acupressure, and physical therapy.

MY ACTION PLAN

- Use a 0 to 10 pain scale, 10 being the worst pain I can imagine, to rate pain intensity.
- Keep a pain journal, like the American Cancer Society Pain Control Record, to help my physician better understand what I am experiencing. Include a description of the pain (stabbing, burning, etc.), and pain location and triggers.
- Have a discussion with my physician about pain I am experiencing and options to control it
- Spend time doing activities that I enjoy
- Set aside some time each day for an activity that promotes emotional well-being like massage, listening to music, walking on the beach, yoga, etc. Torrance Memorial Health Education Department (310) 517-4660, The Wellness Community South Bay Cities, as well as other community organizations and schools offer these types of activities.
- Discuss a referral to a neurologist or chronic pain specialist with my physician
- Discuss a referral to the Rehabilitation Department at Torrance Memorial Medical Center for an evaluation

OTHER:

TO LEARN MORE

Chronic Pain

Lance Armstrong Foundation: Learn About Cancer Physical Effects: Chronic Pain
<http://www.livestrong.org/Get-Help/Learn-About-Cancer/Cancer-Support-Topics/Physical-Effects-of-Cancer/Chronic-Pain>

Pain Control

American Cancer Society: Pain Control
<http://www.cancer.org/Treatment/TreatmentsandSideEffects/PhysicalSideEffects/Pain/PainDiary/index>
Cancer.net: Managing Side Effects: Pain
<http://www.cancer.net/patient/All+About+Cancer/Treating+Cancer/Managing+Side+Effects/Pain+-+ASCO+curriculum>

Pain Record

American Cancer Society: Pain Control Record
<http://www.cancer.org/acs/groups/cid/@nho/documents/webcontent/pain-diary.pdf>

Pain Scale

"Faces" Pain Scale
<http://pain.about.com/od/testingdiagnosis/ig/pain-scales/Wong-Baker.htm>

Post Breast Therapy Pain

Cancer Supportive Care: Post Breast Therapy Pain Syndrome Handout
www.cancersupportivecare.com/pbtpshandout.php

Therapeutic Body Work

American Cancer Society: Acupuncture
<http://www.cancer.org/Treatment/TreatmentsandSideEffects/ComplementaryandAlternativeMedicine/ManualHealingandPhysicalTouch/acupuncture>
Torrance Memorial Therapeutic Body Work Series
http://torrancememorial.org/Health_Education/Therapeutic_Body_Work_Series.aspx