



# TORRANCE MEMORIAL

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## CANCER SURVIVORSHIP PROGRAM

A PARTNER WITH THE UCLA-LIVESTRONG™ CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

### BREAST CANCER SURVIVOR PROGRAM RECURRENCE AND LIVING WITH UNCERTAINTY

- Some cancer survivors may live with the fear of recurrence and uncertainty, that is, never being 100% certain that their cancer is gone for good.
- Transitioning from active treatment and “doing everything I can to beat my cancer” to the relative inactivity of routine medical care and follow-up typically requires an emotional readjustment.
- The American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) recommends the following guidelines for follow-up and post-treatment surveillance of breast cancer survivors:
  - Careful history and physical examination by a physician experienced in surveillance and breast exam, and mammography are the most important follow-up activities for breast cancer survivors
  - Physician exams should be every 3 to 6 months for the first 3 years, every 6 to 12 months for years 4 and 5, and annually thereafter.
  - Breast cancer survivors should continue annual mammography, and women who have had lumpectomy or partial mastectomy and radiation should have an additional mammogram 6 months after the completion of radiation therapy.
- Breast cancer survivors who have a significant family history should discuss genetic counseling with their physician
- Patients taking tamoxifen who have not had a hysterectomy should have an annual gynecologic examination because tamoxifen slightly increases the risk of cancer of the uterus.
- Patients taking certain other hormonal therapies should have bone density screening
- ASCO does not recommend bone scans, chest x-rays, PET scans or CT, tumor markers or routine blood work for breast cancer survivors who have no symptoms of disease
- Although studies are not conclusive, evidence suggests that regular exercise, a healthy weight and low-fat diet may reduce the risk of recurrence.

### MY ACTION PLAN

#### FOLLOW UP APPOINTMENTS

- Schedule my follow-up appointment with my medical oncologist
- Schedule my next mammogram
- Schedule my follow-up appointment with my radiation oncologist
- Schedule my bone density screening
- Schedule my GYN exam
- Discuss genetic issues and genetic counseling with my medical oncologist

#### NUTRITION

- Talk to my doctor or nurse about my specific calcium requirements
- Maintain a diet high in calcium and vitamin D

#### EXERCISE

- Make weight-bearing exercise a normal part of my daily routine (minimum 30 minutes three times per week).
- Check with my physician before I start my exercise program.
- Personal goal: \_\_\_\_\_

Talk to my doctor or nurse about my concerns about recurrence

OTHER:

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#### TO LEARN MORE:

##### Exercise and Weight Management

Torrance Memorial: Scale Down Program (310) 784-4897

[http://torrancememorial.org/Health\\_Education/Weight\\_Loss.aspx](http://torrancememorial.org/Health_Education/Weight_Loss.aspx)

Torrance YMCA Health and Fitness Program (310) 325-5885

[www.ymcala.org](http://www.ymcala.org)

##### Follow-up and post-treatment surveillance

American Society of Clinical Oncology

<http://www.asco.org/ASCO/Downloads/Cancer%20Policy%20and%20Clinical%20Affairs/Quality%20of%20Care/Fillable%20Breast%20Cancer%20Survivorship%20Plan%20v3%20102009.doc>

CancerCare.org: After Treatment Ends: Tools for the Adult Cancer Survivor

[http://www.cancer.org/pdf/booklets/ccc\\_survivor.pdf](http://www.cancer.org/pdf/booklets/ccc_survivor.pdf)

Susan G. Komen for the Cure: Medical Care After Treatment: Follow up

[http://ww5.komen.org/uploadedFiles/Content\\_Binaries/806-354a.pdf](http://ww5.komen.org/uploadedFiles/Content_Binaries/806-354a.pdf)

##### Recurrence

American Cancer Society: When Your Cancer Comes Back: Understanding Recurrence

<http://www.cancer.org/Treatment/SurvivorshipDuringandAfterTreatment/UnderstandingRecurrence/WhenYourCancerComesBack/index>

**LIVESTRONG:** Fear of Recurrence

<http://www.livestrong.org/Get-Help/Learn-About-Cancer/Cancer-Support-Topics/Emotional-Effects-of-Cancer/Fear-of-Recurrence>

##### Tamoxifen

American Cancer Society: Tamoxifen

<http://www.cancer.org/Treatment/TreatmentsandSideEffects/GuidetoCancerDrugs/tamoxifen>

Susan G. Komen for the Cure: Tamoxifen

[http://ww5.komen.org/uploadedFiles/Content\\_Binaries/806-326a.pdf](http://ww5.komen.org/uploadedFiles/Content_Binaries/806-326a.pdf)

##### Uncertainty

American Cancer Society: Living With Uncertainty: The Fear of Cancer Recurrence

<http://www.cancer.org/Treatment/SurvivorshipDuringandAfterTreatment/UnderstandingRecurrence/LivingWithUncertainty/index>

**LIVESTRONG:** Living With Uncertainty

<http://www.livestrong.org/Get-Help/Learn-About-Cancer/Cancer-Support-Topics/Emotional-Effects-of-Cancer/Living-With-Uncertainty>