

# I CAN NEWSLETTER

Fighting cancer through science, healthy living, and prevention

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### Fast Facts

- Cancer Screening Fact Sheet
- Nutrition to Lower Disease Risk Fact Sheet
- Physical Activity Fact Sheet

For more information about cancer treatment and other topics, visit [www.TexasOncology.com](http://www.TexasOncology.com).

### About Texas Oncology

As an independent oncology practice, Texas Oncology is comprised of more than 300 physicians and more than 100 sites of service throughout Texas and southeastern Oklahoma and is a pioneer in community-based cancer care. Patients are treated with today's most advanced, effective cancer technologies, therapies, cancer treatments, and have the opportunity to take part in some of the most promising clinical trials in the nation for new drugs and treatments for a broad range of cancers, close to home near the support of family and friends. Texas Breast Specialists and Texas Urology Specialists are a part of Texas Oncology.

Learn more at 1-888-864-ICAN (4226) or [www.TexasOncology.com](http://www.TexasOncology.com).

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## Surviving Cancer

The number of cancer survivors in the U.S. is rising dramatically. The National Cancer Institute reports that there are now 13.7 million cancer survivors, up 40 percent from just 10 years ago. While early detection and cancer treatment advances are increasing cancer survival rates, life after treatment is often the most challenging time for patients. This issue of Texas Oncology's *I Can* newsletter focuses on survivors and embracing life after cancer.

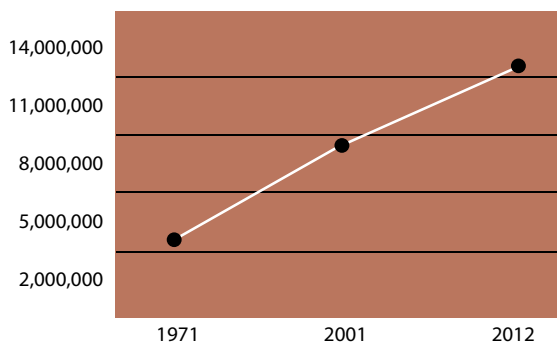
## Life After Cancer

From the moment of a cancer diagnosis, patients are in a race to fight the disease. Texas Oncology patients are surrounded by a team dedicated to caring for them. Patients in treatment often don't stop to process the wide range of emotions that come with a cancer diagnosis. Following treatment, many patients are surprised to feel sad, angry, or disappointed, when they expected to feel happy and relieved. It is important to stay close to friends and family after treatment and recognize that while there will be challenges, survivors can celebrate life and find the positives in life after cancer.

**"Every situation and milestone, whether it be a birth, marriage, death, or a cancer diagnosis, shapes and defines us – we are always evolving from life experiences and creating a 'new normal.'"**

**– Lauren Brandt, LMSW**  
**Social Worker, Texas Oncology–Austin Central**

Cancer Survivors in the U.S.



Cancer survivors often face life changes after their treatment is complete. Learning to balance what was once normal with the “new normal” can be challenging, but many positive things can come from change. Knowing what to expect, being proactive, and planning for change can make the transition to life after cancer smoother and more enjoyable.

**“It is important for survivors to get involved in living again and reconnect with family and friends. Engaging family and friends in the journey can help survivors better navigate changed roles and relationships as they embrace life after cancer.”**

**– Karen Carr, M.D.**  
**Medical Oncologist, Texas Oncology–Midland**

After fighting cancer, survivors may have new perspectives or approach life differently. Many patients find that they have grown through their experience with cancer and that the challenges they have faced have made them a better, stronger, and more empathetic person.

## Eight ways Texas Oncology patients have embraced life after cancer:

- Set new goals and write them down to track progress
- Start a daily or weekly journal
- Set aside “me time” each week and do something you have always wanted to do or that you enjoy
- Join a survivor’s support group
- Have open and honest communication with family and friends about how you’re feeling
- Take care of yourself and be patient with your body
- Be aware of your body, but don’t jump to conclusions – call your doctor with concerns
- Surround yourself with supportive family and friends

## Most Common Questions After Cancer Treatment

By Anand Shivnani, M.D.  
Radiation Oncologist, Texas Oncology–Sherman

### Q: How long until I feel normal again?

**A:** It's common for patients to feel tired, depressed, anxious, or "out of their own skin" after completing treatment. There is no set time when these feelings will go away, but there are things you can do to combat these feelings. You can learn more in the article "What to Expect" on this page. It takes time, but you will begin to adjust to your life post-cancer.

### Q: How frequently will I need to see the doctor after treatment is completed?

**A:** It depends on the type of cancer you have, the type of treatment you received, and many other factors. Your oncologist will want to keep a close eye at first, but as your life gains distance from the time of diagnosis, your visits will be less frequent. Consult with your physician about the frequency of your check-ups.

### Q: Who is considered a cancer survivor?

**A:** I think that the moment someone is diagnosed with cancer, they become a survivor. Others may have a different opinion about what it means to be a survivor, and there is no right or wrong answer. However you choose to define it, survivorship is simply looking toward the future and engaging in life fully during and after cancer treatment.



## What to Expect: Healing from the Inside Out

### Seeing Yourself in New Light

*When looking in the mirror, remember:*

- Chemotherapy may have resulted in hair loss, but in most cases it will begin growing back four to six weeks after treatment is complete.
- Embrace scars as a sign of beating cancer.
- Weight gain or loss may have changed your body; take back your health by eating healthy foods and exercising.

### Facing the Emotional Ups and Downs

*At times you may feel:*

- A zest for life
- Grateful and philanthropic
- A desire to try something new
- Fear or anxiety about cancer recurrence
- Depressed or lonely
- Guilty from beating cancer when others have not

*Participating in a survivor's support group provides a and safe environment to explore your emotions and feelings.*

### Understanding Healing

*Listen to your body and know:*

- Your body is recovering from treatment; healing takes time.
- You may have lingering side effects such as swelling, pain, or even memory changes; talk with your doctor about managing symptoms.
- Tasks or hobbies that were once easy may now be challenging; take time to adjust or find new ways to stay active.
- Fight fatigue by getting plenty of rest, conserving energy, taking breaks, and asking for help when you need it.



## Survivors Speak Out

Texas Oncology survivors share their best advice for patients transitioning from treatment to life after cancer.



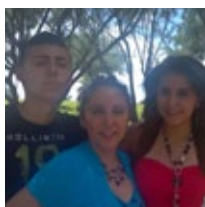
**“I concentrate on staying positive and making every moment count.”**

– **Kathy Robinson**  
Breast Cancer Survivor, Midland



**“Humor was the best drug of all during the entire diagnosis, surgery, recovery, chemotherapy times two, and afterwards. Admittedly, it isn’t always easy to find, but when a gem presents itself, I pounce.”**

– **Greg Johnson**  
Two-time Colon Cancer Survivor, Dallas



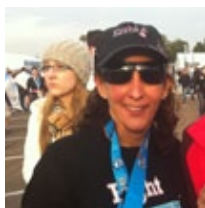
**“Take life one day at a time.”**

– **Laura Bazan**  
Breast Cancer Survivor, McAllen



**“True victory over cancer isn’t just a full physical recovery, it is never letting go of who you are and what you love. Life is more than a start and a finish, it’s a journey, so don’t forget to enjoy the trip.”**

– **Shane Spinks**  
Colon Cancer Survivor, Keller



**“As a survivor, I have a new outlook on living a healthier lifestyle, which has fueled my passion for exercising to reduce my risk of recurrence. Wish me luck on crossing my next finish line at the Chicago Marathon!”**

– **Jeana Quintana**  
Breast Cancer Survivor, Dallas



## Protecting Your Health After Cancer

After cancer treatment, it is important to take care of your body and stay healthy.

**“By making healthy everyday choices and simple lifestyle changes, cancer survivors can improve and protect their overall health.”**

– **Carlos Encarnacion, M.D., FACP**  
Medical Oncologist, Texas Oncology–Waco

Texas Oncology suggests five steps for a healthier life after cancer:

1. Eat a well-balanced diet. Limit red and processed meats, enjoy at least two and a half cups of fruits and vegetables each day, select whole grains, and limit alcohol.
2. Be active. Exercise at least two and a half hours each week, starting slowly to rebuild endurance.
3. Quit smoking. Research has consistently proven that not smoking is vital to staying healthy.
4. Treat side effects. Talk with your oncologist about lingering side effects. There may be therapies that can help minimize or eliminate them.
5. Remember checkups. Re-establish the relationship with your primary care physician and schedule regular screenings. Talk with your oncologist about when to transition medical care.