



## Staying Safe in Recovery

### Key Points

- Medications, and some late effects of treatment can make you dizzy, and increase your risk of falling.
- Keep a list of your medications, why you take them, and the dose – bring it with you to any doctor or dentist appointment.

### Stay Safe - Prevent Falls

You may still feel weak or tired at times. Medication may cause dizziness, changes in vision or hearing, or a sudden drop in your blood pressure. Any of these may cause you to be unsteady on your feet.

These tips will help keep you safe at home.

- ✓ If you feel dizzy, weak, lightheaded, or unsteady, ask a family member or caregiver for help.
- ✓ If you have been lying down for a while, be sure to sit up for a few minutes before trying to stand. It can help with dizziness.
- ✓ Wear glasses or hearing aids when needed. Wear proper shoes that have non-skid soles.
- ✓ Avoid floppy slippers, bare feet, or loose stockings. Use your walker, crutch, or brace.
- ✓ Throw rugs are unsafe and should be removed. Keep commonly used items within easy reach.
- ✓ Be aware of any tubes or lines, if you have any..
- ✓ If your treatment caused peripheral neuropathy, continue the safety precautions you followed during treatment.

### Stay Safe - Prevent Medication Errors

**Keep a list of ALL the medications you are taking. Write down:**

- ✓ the name of the medication and why you take it
- ✓ the strength of the medication (ex. 10 mg) and the dose you use
- ✓ how often you take it and how you take it (by mouth? by injection?)
- ✓ include over-the-counter products, herbal and other types of supplements, vitamins, minerals, and alternative/enhancement products



**Bring this medication list to all your doctor and dentist appointments.**

## It's Important to stay safe

- The medicines that were used to treat your cancer can be very strong. Even medications you take for side effects may have some unpleasant side effects of their own.
- A certain drug or dose may be life-saving for someone. That same drug or dose may cause someone else to become very sick or even die.
- Certain foods or other drugs may weaken, strengthen, or block the intended actions of a medication.
- Ask if you have any questions or concerns about your medications. When you pick up a refill at the pharmacy, look at the name and the medication. If it looks different or the name sounds different, ask the **pharmacist**, not the counter person.
- Use only 1 pharmacy (or 1 pharmacy chain) to fill all your prescriptions, whenever possible.
- Report any side effects to your doctor.

## Stay safe while you start your new normal

### Exercise

Regular exercise increases your sense of well-being in a number of ways:

- Increased strength and endurance
- Lower anxiety and depression and improve your mood
- Boost your self esteem and help with body image
- Help with feelings of fatigue and improve the quality of your sleep

### Eat a balanced diet

Eat a varied diet that include 2-3 cups of fruits and vegetables a day, healthy fats (Omega-3s), whole grains, and protein sources that are low in fat (lean meat, eggs, fish). For more information, see Nutrition and the Cancer Survivor. Also, talk to your doctor before taking any vitamins or supplements.

Whether you need to gain or lose weight, talk to your doctor and a registered dietitian to make sure you get all your nutrition needs met during your weight change. If you need to lose weight, aim for a slow steady loss – about 1-2 pounds a week.

Additional materials about food safety, sleep tips, stress management, quitting tobacco, and more are available in the Patient Education Health Library in the Roswell Park patient portal, in your clinic, and in the Resource Center for Patients and Families, located inside the hospital cafeteria on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor.