

Cancer Recurrence

Cancer recurrence happens when cancer returns after treatment. It may come back in the same place or in another part of the body. When cancer reappears at the original site, it is called local recurrence. Regional recurrence refers to tumors developing in lymph nodes or tissues near the site of the first cancer. Distant recurrence is when cancer spreads to areas far from where it started.

Causes and Risk

Recurrence can happen if the first treatment did not destroy all cancer cells. This does not mean that the cancer was treated insufficiently. Some cancer cells are resistant and survive treatment.

While recurrence cannot always be prevented, you can support your overall health and reduce risk by:

- Eating nutritious foods
- Exercising regularly
- Avoiding tobacco use
- Staying consistent with follow-up appointments

These steps help you maintain your health while monitoring for any changes.

Cancer Progression vs. Cancer Recurrence

Cancer progression happens when cancer grows, spreads, or worsens during treatment or shortly after treatment ends. This means the cancer did not respond as expected or has continued to develop.

Cancer recurrence happens when cancer returns after treatment and after a period when no cancer is detected. Recurrence can happen in the same place, nearby lymph nodes, or another part of the body.

Symptoms of Recurrence

Symptoms can vary depending on the type of cancer and where it returns. Some signs may resemble symptoms from the original cancer, while others may feel new or unexplained. Symptoms to watch for include:

- New lumps or swelling
- Persistent pain
- Unexplained weight loss or gain
- Night sweats
- Severe fatigue
- Sores that do not heal

If you notice any new or concerning symptoms, talk with your care team.

What Guides Treatment After a Recurrence

- Type of cancer
- Your age and overall health
- Where the recurrence is located
- How well you tolerated previous treatments
- How widespread the cancer is
- Your goals, values, and treatment preferences
- Timing of recurrence

About Texas Oncology

Founded in 1986, Texas Oncology is an independent, physician-led practice and a member of the US Oncology Network. With more than 550 physicians and 300 locations across Texas, Texas Oncology serves over 250,000 cancer patients each year.

Texas Oncology provides advanced care across 19 specialties and offers a comprehensive clinical trials and research program that has contributed to the development of more than 100 FDA-approved cancer therapies. Learn more at [TexasOncology.com](https://www.texasoncology.com).