

# What happens after chemotherapy for metastatic testicular cancer?

Most people diagnosed with metastatic (advanced) testicular cancer can expect to be cancer free after treatment. For a small number of people, the cancer may come back. For this reason your doctor will see you on a regular basis to check if this happens. Early detection will help you achieve best outcomes. You can talk with your doctor about what the chance of your cancer coming back may be.

The chance of testicular cancer coming back reduces over time. Most people will be followed-up for at least five years after chemotherapy ends. This can be longer depending on the type of testicular cancer you had (non-seminoma/mixed testicular cancer or seminoma testicular cancer). Your doctor will talk with you about the best follow-up plan for you.

There are several parts of follow-up, these include:

<b>Clinic appointments</b>		Regular appointments with your doctor to check your health and concerns you have about any physical changes you have noticed, fertility, mental health, or other issues. These appointments are important to help keep you well after treatment.
<b>Physical Examination</b>		Regular physical examinations, including checking your other testicle, are important to help monitor any signs of the cancer coming back.
<b>Blood Tests</b>	<i>Tumour markers</i>	Some testicular cancers make proteins called “tumour markers”. Changes in the tumour markers may show the cancer has come back. Tumour markers are monitored through blood tests and include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alpha-fetoprotein (AFP)</li> <li>• Beta human chorionic gonadotropin (bhCG)</li> <li>• Lactate dehydrogenase (LDH)</li> </ul>
	<i>General wellbeing</i>	Long-term side effects, e.g. high cholesterol, after chemotherapy may be an issue for some people. Your doctor will arrange tests every now and then to check your cholesterol levels and your general well-being.
	<i>Testosterone</i>	Some people develop low testosterone (male sex hormone) levels after a testicle has been removed and/or after chemotherapy. These levels are also monitored because when testosterone is low, you may feel tired or less interested in sex and there are solutions to help if this is the case.
<b>CT chest, abdomen and pelvis</b>		A CT (“cat” scan) is one way to monitor if the cancer has come back.

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The table below shows the recommended follow-up for people diagnosed with metastatic testicular cancer after chemotherapy.

- Figure 1 relates to pure seminoma testicular cancer
- Figure 2 relates to non-seminoma/mixed testicular cancer.

Sometimes, your doctor will recommend an alternative follow-up plan, for example, if you have had surgery after chemotherapy, so it is best to check with your doctor.

“X” shows when the assessment is due. For example, if you stopped treatment in January, your next visit and tests would be 3 months later in April for both seminoma and non-seminoma/mixed testicular cancer.

**Figure 1: Follow-up Recommendations for Pure Seminoma Testicular Cancer After Chemotherapy.**

	Months since chemotherapy finished										
	3	6	9	12	18	24	36	48	60	60+	
Physical exam	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Discuss with your doctor
Tumour markers	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Other blood tests	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	
CT		X		X		X	X		X		
	Year 1			Year 2			Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6+	

**Figure 2: Follow-up Recommendations for Non-Seminoma/Mixed Testicular Cancer After Chemotherapy.**

	Months since chemotherapy finished													
	3	6	9	12	15	18	21	24	30	36	48	60	60+	
Physical exam	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Discuss with your doctor
Tumour markers	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Other blood tests	X	X		X				X		X	X	X		
CT		X		X		X		X		X		X		
	Year 1			Year 2				Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6+			

As well as regular checks to see if the cancer has come back, it is important to include other ways to improve your general health and wellbeing after being diagnosed with testicular cancer.

You can find out more here:

[https://anzup.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/ANZ-Test-cancer-flyer\\_PRINT-4-1.pdf](https://anzup.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/ANZ-Test-cancer-flyer_PRINT-4-1.pdf)