# Why Should a Cancer Survivor Go See a Primary Care Doctor?

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#### Who is a primary care doctor?

- Family physician: old ter (GP)
- Pediatrician
- Internist
- Med/Peds
- Nurse practitioner within one of the above
- Physician assistant within one of the above
- ?gynecologist?: some do primary care for women

#### Abbreviations that go along with doctors

- FP
- GP
- IM
- NP
- PA
- PCP
- PMD
- MD
- DO
- NP-PhD



#### What does a primary care doctor do?

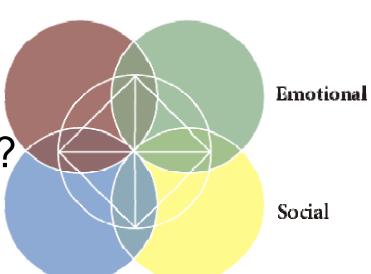
- Preventative care
- Coordinate health care efforts: communication between specialists (frequent emails!)
- "Hey, you ought to go see a doctor about that."
- Advocate
- Paperwork
- Common diseases: high blood p diabetes, back pain, asthma, etc



#### What does a primary care doctor do?

Mental

- Whole person
- Front line
- Promotion of healthy habits
- The rest of the family
- Translation
- Is problem serious-does specialist, and if so who?



### Why do I need a primary care doc in addition to my 6 zillion specialists?

- Whole person care
- Reduces duplication of efforts, tests, time
- Costs less money
- On-going relationship
- New stuff that pops up
- Reasssurance that a symptom is NOT
- related to cancer, or it could be and needs to be checked out further: pt AC is an example
- Cancer survivors have "normal" problems too, totally unrelated to cancer! (high cholesterol, diabetes, high blood pressure, etc)

#### How can I maximize my primary care?

- Records, records, records!!! Often getting copies in person is better
- Communicate between you, your other doctors, and me.
- Stay in one health care system as much as possible.

One primary care doctor af

Tell us.





### How does the primary care doctor use my survivorship plan?

- For review of past treatments, and accurate documentation
- To have fun with insurance companies
- To direct appropriate preventative care measures

RECIPES

- To know what to avoid
- Tell us things that we don't k need to know!

### The cancer is in the past. Don't I get treated like everybody else now?

- RW is a 44 year old male who came in for a routine physical.
- Normal preventative care for a 44 year old male:
  - Blood pressure check
  - Measure cholesterol
  - Check weight
  - Screen for tobacco, alcohol overuse, drug use
  - Tetanus shot if not in the past 10 years
  - Flu shot if he is around little kids or is a health care worker

### The cancer is in the past. Don't I get treated like everybody else now?

- On history, I learn that RW had Hodgkin's lymphoma, had his spleen removed, and got radiation
- Preventative care for him:
  - Screen for depression
  - Screen for new lesions on the skin
  - Screen for jaw or dental abnormalities
  - Screen for lung disease with pulmonary function tests and CXR
  - Immunization against pneumonia
  - Immunization against meningococcus
  - Thyroid ultrasound to look for nodules
  - Ultrasound of neck arteries to look for blockages
  - EKG and echocardiogram
  - Baseline blood tests of the liver
  - Baseline blood tests of the kidneys
  - colonoscopy

### Can't I get all this stuff from my doctors now?

- Everyone has their role on the team
- Not all things are available at all doctors' offices
- Primary care docs do this all day long
- Coordination of results

#### **Anecdotal Noticings**

- People who don't want a survivorship plan
- Range of familiarity with survivorship amongst primary care docs
  - help from you
  - Oeducate them
  - change docs if it's not working

## Questions?

