



CANCERcare®

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fact sheet

EYE AND VISION CONCERNS DURING TREATMENT

People living with cancer can experience eye or vision changes during cancer treatment. This side effect can be distressing, but there are many ways to help you cope with this treatment side effect.

COMMON EYE OR VISION CHANGES

- Blurry vision
- Diminished peripheral vision
- Partial loss of sight
- Watery or dry eyes
- Eye pain
- Sensitivity to light
- Difficulty seeing in the dark
- Redness
- Discharge
- Distorted eyelids
- Colors may appear differently

MANAGING EYE AND VISION CHANGES DURING CANCER TREATMENT

Ask questions. Before starting treatment, it may be helpful to ask your doctor the following questions:

- What are any common eye and vision changes for my treatment?
- What are some options to alleviate eye and vision changes?
- Are glasses preferred during treatment instead of contact lenses?

- How long can eye and vision issues last?
- Should I see my eye doctor during treatment? If so, how often?

Talk to your health care team. It is important to talk with your doctor about any changes in your eyes or vision. Try keeping a journal to track the timing and severity of any changes to trace any patterns to report to your doctor. Some of the things you may want to write down in your journal include:

- The date and time you experience eye or vision changes
- How long the changes last
- How strong the changes are—for example, if you experience pain, how strong is it on a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being the least amount of pain and 10 the most intense
- How your daily activities are affected—did these changes keep you from sleeping, eating, walking, working or exercising?



Ask for help. Your family members and friends will likely be an invaluable source of support at this time. If you're sensitive to light and are not comfortable driving, ask friends and family members to take turns driving you to appointments. You may also ask for assistance in preparing meals and grocery shopping.

Speak to your health care providers about getting visual aids and support accessories for your home, including bath bars to maintain stability while washing, glasses to help reading or a cane or other device to assist with balance.

Your provider or hospital social worker may also be able to provide information about home services such as home care to help you navigate the house and complete other tasks.

Talk to an oncology social worker. Oncology social workers provide emotional support for people with cancer and their loved ones. These professionals can help you cope with the challenges of a cancer diagnosis and guide you to resources. CancerCare offers free counseling and case management from professional oncology social workers who understand the challenges faced by people with cancer and their caregivers. We can work with you one-on-one to develop strategies for coping with treatment and its side effects.



CancerCare® Can Help

Founded in 1944, CancerCare is the leading national organization providing free support services and information to help people manage the emotional, practical and financial challenges of cancer. Our comprehensive services include case management, counseling and support groups over the phone, online and in-person, educational workshops, publications and financial and co-payment assistance. All CancerCare services are provided by master's-prepared oncology social workers and world-leading cancer experts.

To learn more, visit www.cancercares.org or call **800-813-HOPE (4673)**.

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