

Psycho-Oncology



The Psycho-Oncology program at the Swedish Cancer Institute is the oldest, largest and most complete patient-support program in the Pacific Northwest. Our medical director, seven masters-level oncology social workers, psychiatrist and transportation and housing coordinator focus on ways to improve the quality of life of patients with cancer.

What is Psycho-Oncology?

Facing a serious illness such as cancer can be very distressing — from the disease itself to the financial concerns patients and their families face. Cancer can lead to countless challenges and difficulties for patients' social, emotional and physical functioning. Psycho-Oncology focuses on helping patients and families maintain the emotional well-being needed to cope with the stresses of cancer diagnosis and treatment.

Benefits of Psycho-Oncology

Psycho-Oncology improves patients' quality of life. General distress, anxiety and depression can be treated by any of the professionals who make up the Psycho-Oncology care team, including the oncologist, oncology nurses, social workers and psychiatrists. All of these Swedish Cancer Institute clinicians are specially trained to help patients through the cancer experience.

What to expect

Swedish is committed to developing an individualized treatment plan to optimize patients' ability to deal with illness. The team works with patients and their families to define treatment goals and concerns, and develop a plan to address them.

The program provides a wide range of services that includes individual and family counseling, support groups, and assistance with insurance, financial issues, transportation and housing. Our support-group program is geared to meet the emotional and support needs of patients and families. These groups include:

- One general cancer group for people living with chronic cancer
- A gynecological cancer group
- A lung-cancer group
- Two breast-cancer support groups — with one focusing on newly diagnosed patients and one that focuses on survivorship
- A caregiver group for the patient's family members and significant others

For more information, or if you are interested in meeting with a social worker to discuss a topic that concerns you or your family, please call 206-540-0477.



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