

A Toolkit to Manage Cancer-Related Disability

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Outline

What is cancer-related disability?

Which healthcare team members can help me manage cancer-related disability?

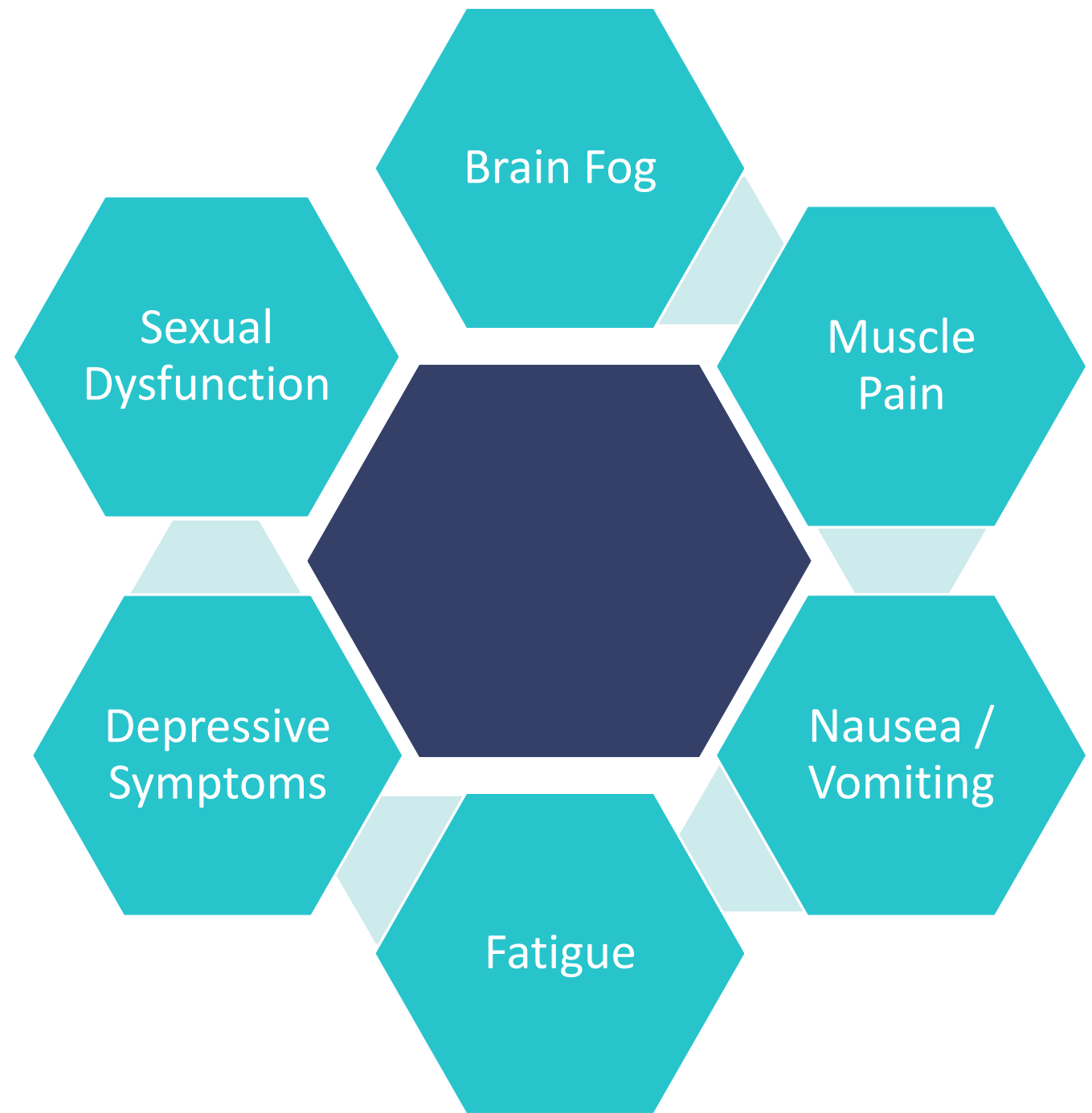
How do I talk about cancer-related disability?

Strategies to manage cancer-related disability



What is
cancer-
related
disability?

Cancer-Related Disability



Cancer-Related
Disability can be
associated
with...





65%

Physical Function

54%

Work, Caregiving, Shopping



37%

Bathing, Dressing, Toileting

Cancer and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)



Image from [Disabled and Here](#)

“A person with a disability is someone who:

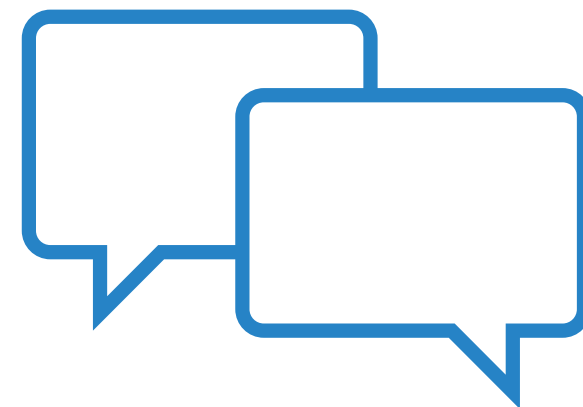
- has a **physical or mental impairment** that substantially limits one or more major life activities,
- has a history or **record of such an impairment** (such as cancer that is in remission), or
- is **perceived by others as having such an impairment** (such as a person who has scars from a severe burn).”



Who can
help me
with cancer-
related
disability?

Talking to your providers about ongoing symptoms

- Be prepared
 - Write down your concerns before your appointment
 - Bring something to take notes
 - Bring a support person if desired
- Explain how these symptoms impact your life
- Tell your provider what you want or need
 - Ask for needed referrals



Your oncology or primary care physician can provide you with a referral to:

**OCCUPATIONAL
THERAPY**

**PHYSICAL
THERAPY**

**SPEECH
LANGUAGE
PATHOLOGY**

PHYSIATRIST

**CERTIFIED
EXERCISE
SPECIALIST**

**COUNSELING
AND
PSYCHIATRY**



OCCUPATIONAL
THERAPY

Support you through:

- Assistive Technology
Recommendations and Training
- Home and Office modification
- Lifestyle Redesign
- Compensatory Strategies
- Self-management

Located in:

- Outpatient, inpatient, school, and home-based settings



PHYSICAL THERAPY

Support you through:

- Muscle Strengthening
- Home Exercise Programs
- Community Mobility Support
- Durable Medical Equipment

Located in:

- Outpatient, inpatient, school, and home-based settings



Speech Therapy

Support you through:

- Assessment of cognitive impairment
- Cognitive rehabilitation
- Nonverbal communication strategies
- Problem-solving skills

Located in:

- Outpatient, inpatient, school, and home-based settings



Physiatry

Support you through:

- Medical management
- Referral to rehabilitation services
- Diagnosis of disabling conditions
- Exercise programming

Located in:

- Hospital and outpatient settings

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ACSM ProFinder

ACSM has certified over 32,000 health professionals in 44 countries. Whether you're an employer looking for your next reputable staff member, or an individual seeking the finest professionals in health and fitness training, you'll find your ACSM Pro.

[Access the ACSM ProFinder >>](#)

**Note: The ACSM ProFinder is currently for search only. Attempting to contact someone through the ProFinder tool does not work at this time.*

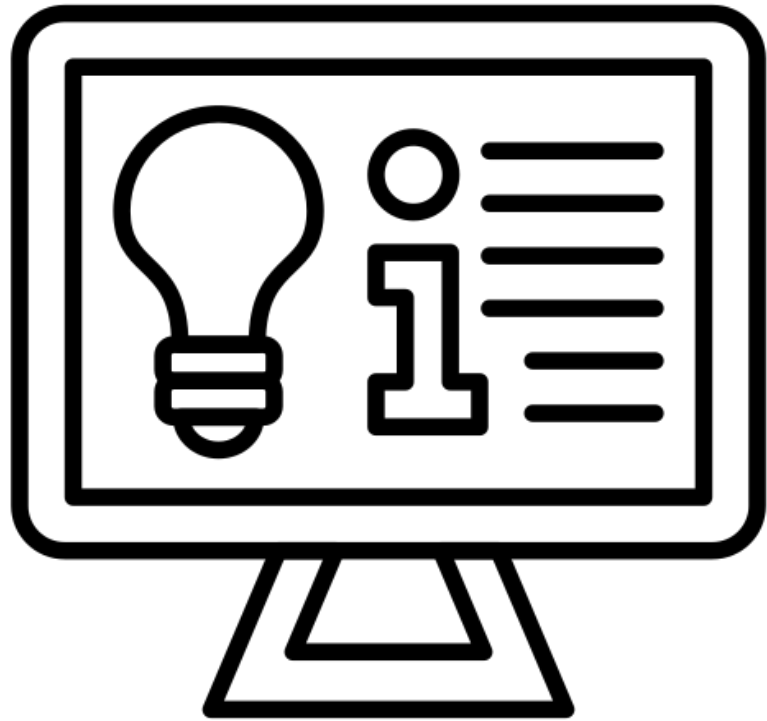
The United States Registry of Exercise Professionals® (USREPS) is an internationally recognized registry of exercise professionals in the United States. USREPS is also an advocate for the exercise professional who holds NCCA-accredited exercise certification on issues that pertain to regulation, access and scope of work. Current ACSM certifications

https://www.exerciseismedicine.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/EIM_Rx-for-Health_Cancer.pdf

How do I find a provider that is a good fit?



- When talking to a new provider ask them: Do you typically work with those diagnosed with cancer?
 - There is no right answer to this question
 - Ask for some examples of how these providers work with individuals with a history of cancer



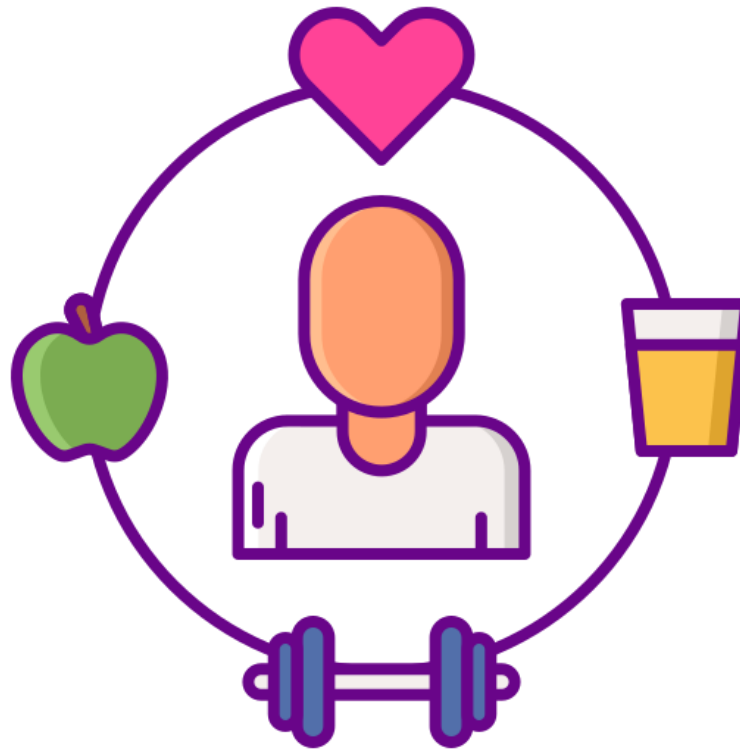
Tips and Tricks to Manage Cancer- Related Disability

Environment

Adapt Your
Surroundings

Social Support

Person



Task

Energy
Conservation

Routine

Self-Care

Adapt Your
Surroundings

Social Support



Energy
Conservation

Routine

Set a consistent routine

Sit during time-consuming tasks (E.g., hair drying; shaving)

Allow time for relaxation between tasks

Keep frequently used items within easy reach

Use a cart to hold all self-care items or clothing

Work Activities

Adapt Your
Surroundings

Social Support



Energy
Conservation

Routine



Focus on one task at a time; limit multitasking

Keep a list of key contacts and phone numbers

Arrange work shifts for your best attention

Read from printed materials instead of the computer screen

Discuss work accommodations with your supervisor

A lawyer with cancer was experiencing lapses in concentration due to medication she was taking.



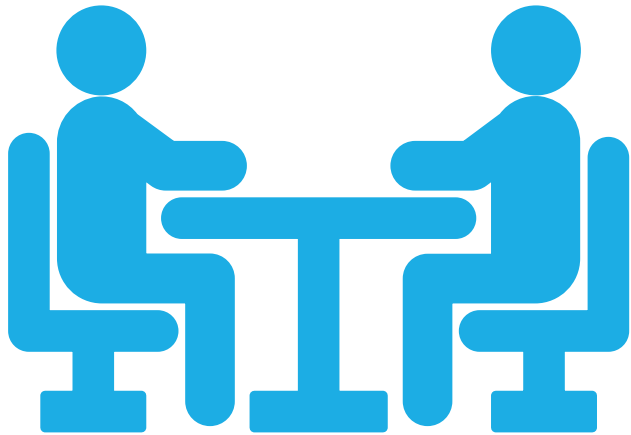
Solution: Her employer gave her uninterrupted time to work throughout her workday and offered remote work options.

A security guard with a history of breast cancer was burned from radiation treatment and experienced discomfort wearing the polyester company uniform.



Solution: The company modified dress code to allow for the use of a cotton uniform with embroidered insignia and employee name.

Requesting Workplace Accommodations



There is no official way to ask for workplace accommodations.

Make it clear that your request is due to a medical condition, not just a personal preference.

Example of a workplace accommodation request:

An employee tells her supervisor, "I'm having trouble getting to work at my scheduled starting time because of medical treatments I'm undergoing."

Leisure Activities



Adapt Your
Surroundings

Social Support



Energy
Conservation

Routine

Keep a checklist or use daily reminders

Try to spread activities throughout the week

Carpool with a friend

Schedule activities in a quiet area (E.g., less distraction)

Sleep and Relaxation

Adapt Your
Surroundings

Social Support



Energy
Conservation

Routine



Meditation or breathing exercise

Regular sleep and waking times

Reduce caffeine intake before bed

Remove distractions from bedroom



Self Advocacy and Cancer-related Disability

Self-advocacy means having the skills and knowledge to communicate your cancer care needs.

Four key skills to be a self advocate

- Information seeking
- Communication
- Problem-solving
- Negotiation

More resources

ADA National Network: <https://adata.org>

Job Accommodation Network:
<https://askjan.org/disabilities/Cancer.cfm>

Cancer and Careers:
<https://www.cancerandcareers.org/en>

Triage Cancer: <https://triagecancer.org>

Cancer Legal Resource Center:
<https://thedrlc.org/cancer/>

APTA Oncology: <https://oncologypt.org/oncology-for/>

Thank you!

Any questions?

