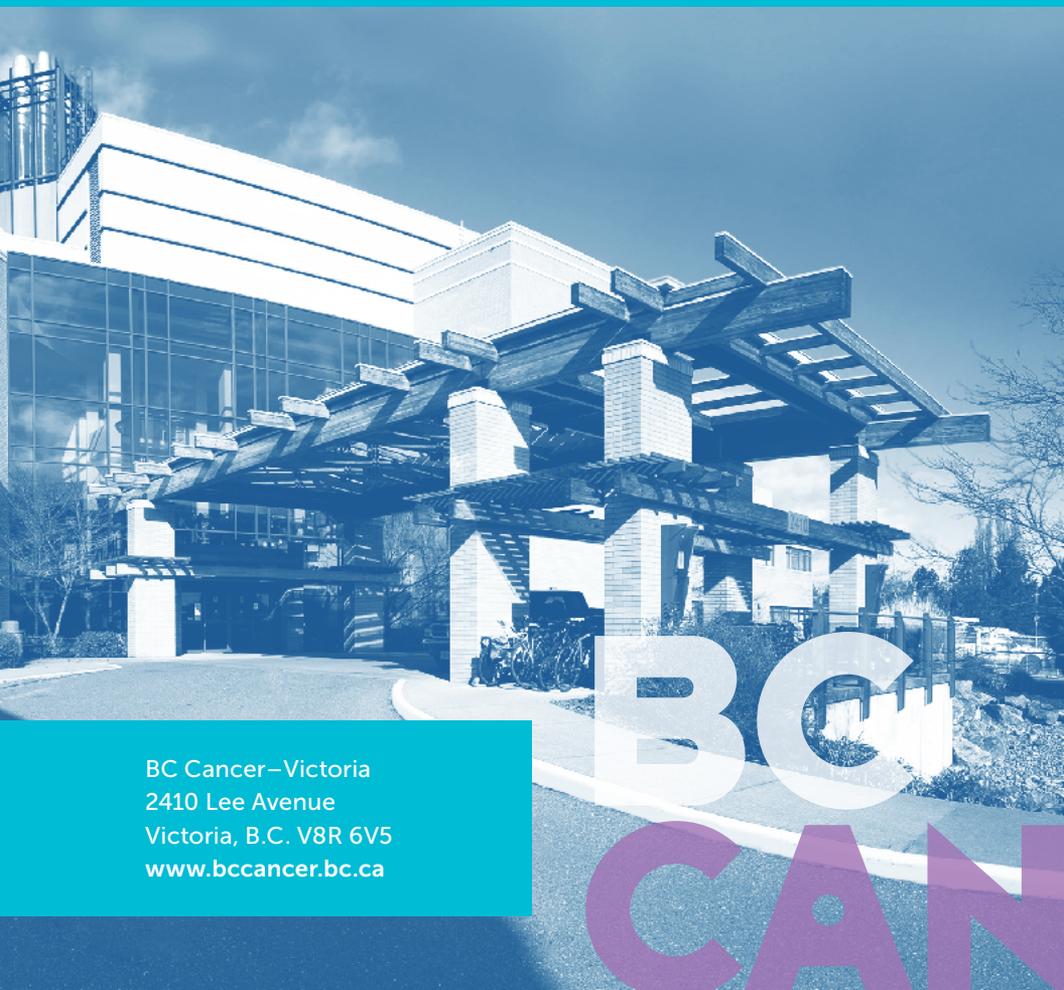




Provincial Health Services Authority

# GUIDEBOOK FOR PATIENTS

## BC Cancer–Victoria



BC Cancer–Victoria  
2410 Lee Avenue  
Victoria, B.C. V8R 6V5  
[www.bccancer.bc.ca](http://www.bccancer.bc.ca)

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BC Cancer Patient Number: \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

Medications: \_\_\_\_\_

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# Introduction to BC Cancer

## **Our vision:**

A world free from cancer

## **Our mission:**

To reduce the burden of cancer in British Columbia

## **Our values:**

We provide person-centred care and support

We collaborate to deliver high-quality integrated care

We treat all those we serve with compassion and kindness

We serve with purpose and passion

We inspire creativity and excellence through innovation

The Ministry of Health, Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA), five regional health authorities, and First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) share responsibility for ensuring all health care programs are effectively and efficiently planned, delivered, monitored and evaluated on behalf of the residents of British Columbia.

BC Cancer is one of the member agencies of PHSA and has six cancer centres:

- Abbotsford
- Kelowna–Sindi Ahluwalia Hawkins Centre
- Prince George–Centre for the North
- Surrey
- Vancouver
- Victoria



# Partners in Care: Your Rights. Our Promise.

## Patients and family members have the right to:

- Receive safe and appropriate care
- Be involved in decisions about your health
- Ask questions about your health and care
- Ask for a second opinion
- Privacy
- Be supported in your spiritual and cultural practices
- See your health information
- Bring a friend or family member to your appointments
- Refuse treatment

## We promise to:

- Provide excellent, safe care
- Give you clear and complete information
- Answer all of your questions clearly
- Help you make health decisions that are right for you
- Keep your health information private
- Provide an interpreter when possible

**All patients, families and staff have the right to be treated with respect, dignity and compassion.**

- Please let us know if you see or hear something at BC Cancer that concerns you.
- Your comments and questions will not affect your care.



## “STOP” – Help us protect our patients!



Infection control information is posted at all BC Cancer entrances.

Please inform your health care providers if, at any time during the course of your treatment, you develop any of the following symptoms:

- Fever
- Diarrhea
- Cough/respiratory symptoms
- New skin rash (e.g. Shingles)

Patients experiencing respiratory symptoms may be asked to wear a mask while visiting the centre.

Please inform your health care providers if you have been diagnosed with or exposed to an infectious disease or “superbug” (e.g. CPO, CRE, MRSA, VRE, or C.difficile).

Please keep in mind that hand hygiene is the single most effective way to prevent the transmission of infectious illness. Alcohol based hand rub is considered the most effective method of cleaning your hands when they are not visibly soiled.



**Please ask your health care providers for information on how to hand wash.**

# BC Cancer – Victoria

## floor-by-floor services/facilities

<b>1st Floor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Patient Entrance (Lee Avenue)</li><li>• Main Lobby</li><li>• Patient Reception</li><li>• Ambulatory Care (Clinics A &amp; D)</li><li>• Brachytherapy Procedure Room</li><li>• Pain &amp; Symptom Management/Palliative Care (Clinic D)</li><li>• PET/CT</li><li>• Radiation Therapy</li></ul>
<b>2nd Floor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Patient Reception</li><li>• Ambulatory Care (Clinics B &amp; C)</li><li>• BC Cancer Foundation</li><li>• Health Information Management (Health Records)</li><li>• Pharmacy</li><li>• Systemic Therapy (IV Chemotherapy)</li></ul>
<b>3rd Floor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Patient Reception</li><li>• Clinical Trials/Deeley Research Centre</li><li>• Nutrition Services</li><li>• Patient &amp; Family Library</li><li>• Patient &amp; Family Counselling</li><li>• Speech Language Pathology</li></ul>

# How can I arrange for transportation?

If you are unable to find a ride to your appointment(s) at the cancer centre, there are other programs, which may be able to assist you. Most of these programs require 24-48 hour notice to arrange service.

In order to provide you with the best care, your appointments require careful coordination. We may not be able to adjust your appointment dates and times to meet the booking requirements of some of these transportation service providers.

If you cannot keep your scheduled appointment, please let us know as soon as possible.

For more information: [www.bccancer.bc.ca/coping-and-support-site/Documents/TravellingToVictoriaForCancerTreatmentBrochure\\_web.pdf](http://www.bccancer.bc.ca/coping-and-support-site/Documents/TravellingToVictoriaForCancerTreatmentBrochure_web.pdf)

## Cancer Drive Line

### For those who need transportation in the greater Victoria area

Cancer Drive Line provides free rides to cancer appointments when there are no other suitable options. Rides are not guaranteed, they are based on driver availability. Book when you get your appointment date/time.

Rides are available 8am - 5 pm Monday – Friday (except statutory holidays).

Call **778.265.0906**

For more information: [www.cancerdriveline.ca](http://www.cancerdriveline.ca)

## Wheels of Hope

### For those who need transportation to Victoria

The Canadian Cancer Society's Wheels of Hope program connects people on Vancouver Island who need transportation to cancer treatments with volunteer drivers. Must provide two business days notice. Rides are based on driver availability. Call **1.888.939.3333**

## Ministry of Health Travel Assistance Program (TAP)

TAP is available to eligible BC residents who must travel outside their home community to obtain non-emergency, physician-referred specialist medical care, and whose travel expenses are not covered by third party insurance or other government programs. **TAP provides discounted rates for ferries, ground transportation such as buses (not BC Transit) and some airlines.**

To be eligible, you must be a BC resident and enrolled in the MSP; you must have a physician's referral for medical services that are not available locally. Escorts are also eligible if travelling with those incapable of independent travel.

Forms are available from your doctor, specialist's office or BC Cancer – Victoria.

Call **250.952.2657** or **1.800.661.2668**

or visit: [www.health.gov.bc.ca/tapbc/tap\\_patient.html](http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/tapbc/tap_patient.html)

## Canadian Cancer Society - Travel Treatment Fund

If you have limited finances and no other options are available to you, the Canadian Cancer Society - Travel Treatment Fund, may be available to you. It may help you with some of your travel and accommodations costs to attend your treatment appointments.

You can print the application from the website <https://cancer.ca/> or call the Cancer Information Service at toll-free **1.888.939.3333**

## Hope Air

Hope Air arranges free flights on Canadian airlines for those who must travel for nonemergency medical appointments and cannot afford the costs.

For more information: <https://hopeair.ca> or call **1.877.346.4673**

## Angel Air

Angel Air Non-profit organization that fly fully ambulatory cancer patients living on Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast to cancer treatment centers, free of cost.

For more information: [www.angelflightek.ca](http://www.angelflightek.ca) or call: **778.677.8920**

## BC Transit Victoria

If you are travelling via BC Transit, there are numerous bus routes, which go by the Cancer Centre/Royal Jubilee Hospital. Route #10 stops at the main entrance for the Royal Jubilee Hospital. For additional Victoria transit information, call **250.382.6161** or visit: <https://www.bctransit.com>

# What accommodations are available if I'm from out of town and unable to stay with friends or family in Victoria?

## Canadian Cancer Society Vancouver Island Cancer Lodge

The Vancouver Island Cancer Lodge run by the Canadian Cancer Society provides lodging for out of town patients and their families, who need to be close to a cancer center for treatment or tests. You must be independent in your daily living activities and/or have an escort to assist you. You can contact the Lodges directly to find out more or to register.

Call **250.592.2662**

Vancouver Island Lodge  
2202 Richmond Avenue  
Victoria, B.C.  
V8R 4R5

## Local hotels providing reduced rates for cancer patients

If you wish to book a hotel, remember to ask if the hotel has a “medical rate” available for cancer patients. For more information about hotels, motels and inns close to the cancer centre, refer to the Medical Travel Accommodation Listing at: <http://csa.pss.gov.bc.ca/medicaltravel/>

## Consider Bed and Breakfasts

Bed and Breakfasts (BNBs) can be a convenient, low-cost alternative to hotels for short-term or extended stays in Victoria. Consider accommodations through the BC Bed and Breakfast Innkeeper’s Guild ([bbcana.com](http://bbcana.com)), AirBnb ([www.airbnb.com](http://www.airbnb.com)) or VRBO ([www.vrbo.com](http://www.vrbo.com)).

For more information on travel and accommodation, please ask your health care team or contact Patient and Family Counselling at:

**250.519.5525** or toll free **1.800.670.3322 x 695525**

# Where can I park?

**Please arrive 15-20 minutes prior to your appointment to find parking.**

Parking is available in the lot across from the main entrance on Lee Avenue.

**Please see the parking map on page 33.**

## Free parking

Parking is free if you are here for appointments and tests related to your cancer treatment, such as care team appointments, chemotherapy, radiation therapy, laboratory tests, and imaging.

To park for free at BC Cancer – Victoria, please check in at the Reception Desk.

## Paid parking

If you are not onsite for cancer treatment, you will have to pay for parking. The parking meter, located at the entrance to the centre, provides hourly (\$1.50 / hr) and weekly (\$26.75) parking, and accepts coins and credit cards only. It does not accept debit cards. You will need your stall number to pay for parking.

# I have a question – who should I call?

I am having concerning symptoms related to my cancer or cancer treatment.

I am confused about how to take my anti-nausea medications.

I have a cancer related question or concern that needs to be addressed by a nurse.

I am sick and I am not sure if I should come to my appointment at BC Cancer.

## **250.519.5596** BC Cancer – Victoria Telephone Nurse Line\*

Monday to Friday 8:30am-4:30pm (Closed weekends and stat holidays)

Please leave a message with your name, your BC Cancer ID, and the reason for your call. Please follow prompts.

\*The line is regularly monitored by a registered nurse who will return your call as soon as possible.

For urgent medical concerns after 4:30pm weekdays, all weekend and stat holidays, call the Royal Jubilee Hospital at **250.370.8000** and ask for a Radiation or Medical Oncologist on call.

This is not an emergency line. If you require emergency medical attention please call **911** or go to your local emergency department.

## What do I need to bring to my first visit?

- Your BC Services/BC Care Card, and one piece of photo ID such as a driver's license
- All your prescription, non-prescription, herbal and alternative medications in their original containers so that the physician or pharmacist may review them with you
- The names and telephone numbers (work and home) of two contact people
- Your health history and any allergies that you may have
- Any X-rays, CDs or DVDs that you may have been given by other physicians or hospitals
- A list of any questions you may have
- Any Advance Care Plan directives or documents
- Your Patient Reported Information and Symptom Measurement (PRISM) form (if you completed it at home)

## What happens at my first visit?

During your first visit, expect your appointment to be at least two to three hours. It can be quite overwhelming. Being informed and prepared can help to make the process less overwhelming. The following suggestions may be helpful:

- Bring a family member or friend with you to help gather all of the new information, for company and for support.
- Check the **BC Cancer Website** for up to date information on any COVID screening or restrictions
- Have a meal before you come (unless otherwise instructed) and/or bring a snack with you.
- Be involved in your care. Ask questions and take notes or ask a family member to assist.
- It may be useful to start keeping a journal in order to keep track of contacts and appointment information.
- A professional interpreter can be arranged for your appointment. Ask a member of your health care team to request one on your behalf or book in advance by calling the Provincial Language Service at **1.877.228.2557**

Check in with the Reception Desk. You will be asked to show your Care Card and photo ID. The receptionist will direct you to the waiting area where you will see your oncologist (a cancer specialist).

You will be asked to complete the Patient Reported Information and Symptom Management (PRISM) form, if you haven't already done so. The PRISM form takes around 15 to 30 minutes to complete.

You will be seen by an oncologist and sometimes other members of your care team such as nurses. The oncologist will do a physical exam and discuss your health history. The oncologist will then talk about a treatment plan and an ongoing care plan with you and your family.

Your treatment plan is a joint decision between you and your oncologist. You will be provided with information to help you decide which treatment option is best for you. You typically do not need to make a decision about your treatment options on your first day if you are not ready to make a decision. You can go home to think about it further and discuss it with family and friends.

The oncologist may arrange for blood tests, x-rays, and/or other medical imaging studies. You may have to wait for these tests before the best treatment can be designed for you. The role of the oncologist is to advise you about your cancer based on all the information known.

If you have pain or other symptoms, your oncologist can help you and your family doctor manage these or may refer you to the symptom management/palliative care team, or other specialists.

At the end of your visit, you may be given an appointment card. This card will contain your next appointment, your oncologist's name and your BC Cancer identification number. Please have this card with you whenever you visit or contact us.

Your appointment card may state, "This is an in person appointment" or it may say, "The clinician will phone you." The latter designates your appointment as a TELEPHONE APPOINTMENT and the physician will phone you at the scheduled time.

Sometimes, no further appointment is needed at BC Cancer and you will be referred to your family physician for follow up care.

# What kinds of questions can I ask my doctor?

Cancer centres and other healthcare facilities are very busy places. Although you will have a doctor that is taking the lead on your care, sometimes you will see other doctors, and there may be several health care providers all caring for you at the same time. This group of professionals communicate regularly about you. You may need a lot of tests and procedures and you might feel that the amount of information is overwhelming and not clear to you. Therefore, it is important that you remain an active member of your healthcare team and ask questions to understand the information. Don't be afraid, embarrassed, or hesitant to ask for exactly what you need from your team. It is important to be involved in and be vocal in the decisions that affect you. Also, sometimes taking notes can be helpful so you can refer back to them and share outcomes of meetings with family and friends.

## For example:

- What type of cancer do I have?
- What stage is the cancer? What does that mean?
- What is the grade of the cancer? What does that mean?
- What can be done to treat this cancer?
- Will the cancer or treatment affect my fertility? What do I need to know about fertility and cancer?
- How do I consent for treatment or research?
- Can I have my labs taken the day before, or does it need to be the same day?
- What is chemotherapy?
- What is radiation therapy?
- What are the short-term and long-term side effects of these treatments?
  - How long will they last?
  - Are there any side effect that could be permanent?
- What are complementary or alternative therapies?
- Could a palliative approach to care be right for me?
- Will I have to purchase any drugs outside of the cancer centre?
  - Will these drugs be covered by my Fair Pharmacare?
- What kinds of feelings (such as sadness, anger, vulnerability, loss of control) am I likely to have after the surgery or other treatments?
- Where can I find help for me and my family and friends to cope with our feelings?
- When will I get back to my normal energy level?
- Will I be able to work while on treatment?

- Are there any symptoms that I should report right away?
  - What constitutes an emergency?
  - Who do I call?
  - When should I go to the emergency room?
- Are there any changes I can make to my lifestyle to improve my health?
- How does being a smoker affect my treatment?
- Who should I contact if I have additional questions?
- Should I get any vaccines before or during my treatment?
- Will I be able to get regular dental cleanings during treatment?



# Who may be on my health care team?

**Your health care team is a group of health care professionals who work to treat your cancer. They may include:**

A **medical oncologist** is a doctor who specializes in diagnosing and treating cancer patients using chemotherapy, hormonal therapy, biological therapy, and targeted therapy.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information: \_\_\_\_\_

A **radiation oncologist** is a doctor who specializes in the treatment of cancer patients using radiation therapy as the main mode of treatment.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information: \_\_\_\_\_

A **general practitioner in oncology (GPO)** is a family doctor that has completed a BC Cancer training program and has an increased knowledge of cancer.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information: \_\_\_\_\_

Your **family doctor, nurse practitioner or general practitioner (GP)** provides general, primary healthcare to you and your family. They play an important part in continuing your care, especially after your cancer treatments are over.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information: \_\_\_\_\_

**Other members of your interdisciplinary team may include:**

- Clerk
- Health Information Staff
- Indigenous Patient Navigator
- Librarian
- Medical Secretary
- Oncology Nurse
- Palliative Care Specialists
- Pharmacist
- Psychiatrist
- Radiation Therapist
- Registered Dietitian
- Social Worker or Counsellor
- Speech Language Pathologist

This list is not exhaustive. Note that there may be other health care professionals involved in your care.

# What resources are available to me at BC Cancer – Victoria?

## BC Cancer Library

BC Cancer offers free library and information services to patients, their families, and members of the public living in BC or Yukon. The library will help you find information about cancer treatment, clinical trials, coping with cancer, relaxation techniques, etc. The library has information for children and some information in other languages.

You can register to borrow books and other materials for four weeks at a time. Library materials can be mailed to borrowers with free return mailing labels. The library offers ebooks on many topics and can also help you find reliable and accurate internet sites.

Email [library\\_vic@bccancer.bc.ca](mailto:library_vic@bccancer.bc.ca) or call **250.519.5517**

For more information: [www.bccancer.bc.ca/library](http://www.bccancer.bc.ca/library)

## Life After Cancer

It takes time to find a “new normal” after cancer treatment. Cancers and cancer treatments can have long-lasting effects. Survivorship resources and services are intended to help a person cope with their new normal, while also ensuring their health care providers have the education, tools, and resources they require to provide high quality care to cancer survivors.

Visit the Life After Cancer section of our website for more information:

[www.bccancer.bc.ca/health-info/coping-with-cancer/life-after-cancer](http://www.bccancer.bc.ca/health-info/coping-with-cancer/life-after-cancer)

## Clinical Trials

Clinical Trials are research studies that involve people. They are the final step in a long process that begins with research in a lab. Only the most promising new treatments reach the clinical trial stage. Treatments used today are the result of past clinical trials. Clinical trials are designed to answer questions about new ways to:

- Prevent cancer
- Find and diagnose cancer
- Treat cancer
- Manage symptoms of cancer

The choice to enter or withdraw from a clinical trial rests completely with each patient. As a treatment option, a clinical trial has possible benefits as well as drawbacks. Your doctors will know which trials are available and will advise whether you meet the eligibility criteria set out in the study.

## **Ethics consultation: Are you facing a difficult medical decision?**

The PHSA Clinical Ethics team provides confidential support to patients and families facing difficult medical decisions.

We do not make decisions for you. We meet with patients, families and/or healthcare teams to identify and help balance different interests & values. We provide the opportunity for a discussion that is safe, respectful and fair. You may refer yourself to a clinical ethicist or ask your health care team to refer you.

Call **604.875.2360** or toll-free **1.888.300.3088 x 2360** to make an appointment for an ethics consultation.

For more information visit:

**[www.bccancer.bc.ca/our-services/services/clinical-ethics](http://www.bccancer.bc.ca/our-services/services/clinical-ethics)**

## **Interpreters**

We will arrange for a professional interpreter to attend your appointment or call into your appointment if you cannot communicate in English. These services are provided at no cost. Ask a member of your health care team to request an interpreter on your behalf or book in advance by calling the Provincial Language Service at **1.877.228.2557**

## **Indigenous Patient Navigator**

Indigenous Patient Navigators (IPNs) are available to support your cancer journey by providing navigational support and connection to cultural resources and supports. If you are interested, the IPN can connect with your First Nations Band, First Nations Health Authority, your Metis Chartered Community, or the urban Indigenous organization where you prefer to get services. You can ask your oncologist or nurse to connect you with an Indigenous Patient Navigator or call **250.889.5145**

## **Intimacy and Sexual Health Clinic**

The Victoria Oncology Intimacy and Sexual Health (VOIS) clinic is for people with gynecologic cancers. Cancer and its treatments can cause changes to your sexual health. Your sexual health is an important part of your overall health. A nurse practitioner is available to talk to you about your sexual health goals. They work with you to create a plan to support your needs. Speak with your doctor and ask for a referral to the VOIS clinic.

## **Nutrition Services**

Nutrition is important at all stages of your cancer care. If you are having difficulty eating, drinking or if you are losing weight during treatment, ask any health care professional to make a referral to a dietitian. See **page 35** for contact information.

Visit our webpage for nutrition information and resources:

**[www.bccancer.bc.ca/health-info/coping-with-cancer/nutrition-support](http://www.bccancer.bc.ca/health-info/coping-with-cancer/nutrition-support)**

You may also call Health Link BC and ask to speak to the oncology dietitian for more general information about cancer and diet.

Call **8-1-1** Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm.

## **Patient and Family Counselling**

It is natural to experience fear, anger, helplessness or other distressing feelings when you or a family member is faced with a diagnosis of cancer and its treatment. Professionally trained social workers/counsellors in Patient and Family Counselling are available to speak with you and to assist you throughout the course of your treatment and for up to 18 months beyond. They can provide individual, couple and family support and offer a number of group programs as well as resources for children and parents.

Call **250.519.5525** or toll-free **1.800.670.3322 x695517**

For more information:

**[www.bccancer.bc.ca/our-services/services/patient-family-counselling](http://www.bccancer.bc.ca/our-services/services/patient-family-counselling)**

## **Pain and Symptom Management / Palliative Care**

All cancer patients, including those who may be cured, are welcome to request a referral to the Pain and Symptom Management/Palliative Care service from any of their health care providers. Palliative care is an approach that improves the quality of life of patients and their families facing the problems associated with life-threatening illness. This care encompasses the prevention and relief of suffering by means of early identification and impeccable assessment and treatment of pain and other problems - physical, psychosocial, and spiritual.

Patients come to the clinic to improve pain control, to cope with other physical problems related to cancer (for example; severe nausea, shortness of breath or fatigue), and for help with emotional and social concerns that occur in living with cancer.

Usually oncologists initiate referrals, but we welcome referrals from other BC Cancer staff, family doctors, and other specialists, and directly from patients and family members.

### **Palliative care:**

- supports the best possible quality of life for the longest possible time
- Can begin at the start of a serious illness and be given alongside treatment designed to combat the disease
- May extend life and provide better quality of life
- Provides relief from pain and other symptoms
- Often allows seriously ill patients to avoid trips to hospital and spend more time at home with loved ones
- is available to ALL people with advanced serious illness

### **Hospice:**

- Is a type of palliative care for people in the final months of life
- Can improve quality of life and is an important source of care and comfort for patients and their families

Palliative care and hospice can be received at home, in the hospital, through an outpatient clinic and in other settings. As part of a patient- centred approach, palliative care (including hospice) allows patients and loved ones to make plans that reflect their goals and preferences.

Call **250.519.5503** or toll-free **1.800.670.3322 x 695503**

## Pharmacy

Pharmacy provides a full range of services for our patients. BC Cancer approved outpatient cancer treatment medications are provided free of charge at the Pharmacy on the 2nd floor. Pharmacy also provides medications for intravenous administration at the clinic. Medication counselling, medication review, and drug information services are also provided. A Drug Access Navigator is available to provide help to patients requiring access to unfunded medications. The Outpatient Pharmacy is open Monday to Friday from 9 am to 5 pm, closed on all statutory holidays.

Call **250.519.5510** or toll-free **1.800.670.3322 x 695510**

## Speech Language Pathology

Cancer and its treatments can affect swallowing, voice, speech, language and overall quality of life. While these effects are most common for patients with head and neck cancers, these can occur with other types of cancer too. Speech Language Pathologists (SLPs) are professionals who can help you manage your communication and swallowing issues, whether they are temporary or long-term. Services can include:

- Testing your swallowing, speech, and voice (before, during, and after treatment)
- Working with you to create a personalized therapy plan to maximize functional outcomes
- Counselling and education for you and your families before and throughout your cancer treatment journey

See the contact list on **page 35**.

## Support Programs

There is a list of in-person and virtual support programs available at:

**<http://www.bccancer.bc.ca/our-services/services/support-programs>**

Call Patient and Family Counselling at **250.519.5525** for more information.

# What other resources are available to me?

## Resources in the community

### **Canadian Cancer Society - CancerConnection.ca**

The Canadian Cancer Society offers an online community where you can share your experiences and build supportive relationships. This forum is lightly moderated and features webinars on a variety of topics relevant to people living with cancer including physical activity, complementary therapies etc. Webinars are available on demand.

Visit: <https://cancerconnection.ca>

### **Canadian Cancer Society - Cancer Information Service**

The Cancer Information Service (CIS) offers general information about cancer as well as services available for patients in communities throughout the province. They also offer a wig and prosthesis bank.

Email [cancerinfo@bc.cancer.ca](mailto:cancerinfo@bc.cancer.ca) or call **1.888.939.3333**

For more information: <https://cancer.ca>

### **Canadian Red Cross – Health Equipment Loan Program (HELP)**

The Red Cross loans out basic health equipment, including wheelchairs, bath aids, toileting aids, walking aids and other aids to daily living. Referral from a doctor/nurse/physiotherapist/occupational therapist is needed for all equipment loans.

For details, depot location, operation hours, and availability of equipment, visit: [www.redcross.ca](http://www.redcross.ca) and follow the links to the HELP Program.

## HealthLink BC

British Columbians have trusted health information at their fingertips with HealthLink BC at: [www.healthlinkbc.ca](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca)

You can learn about health topics, check your symptoms, or find health services and resources near you on their website. Call **8-1-1** for symptom advice, 24/7, every day of the year.

## Inspire Health

Inspire Health is non-profit support service agency that provides supportive care to cancer patients in the areas of mental health, stress management, nutrition support, managing treatment side effects, exercise therapy, sleep and energy, and managing work, life, and relationships. These programs and services are free to cancer patients.

You can register online at: <https://inspirehealth.ca>

## Wellspring Cancer Support - Well on the Web

Wellspring Cancer Support is a non-profit support service agency that provides programs and services that help cancer patients to deal with the emotional, physical and practical challenges that a cancer diagnosis can bring. Programs are offered online, primarily in group formats. A large number of programs exist to address a variety of challenges related to mental health, physical symptom management, and practical concerns.

You can register online at: <https://wellspring.ca>

## 211 British Columbia

211 British Columbia is a free, confidentiality service that connects people to helpful and vital resources in their community. 211 provides information and referrals to a broad range of community, government and social services that assist with challenges such as basic needs, mental health and addictions support, legal and financial assistance, and support for seniors.

Call **2-1-1** for support, 24/7, every day of the year.

## Frequently asked questions

### **How does BC Cancer relate to my family doctor?**

Your family doctor will receive reports and information about what is happening at the cancer centre. He/she will remain your primary physician and you should continue to see him/her for other health issues as you have before. Your family doctor can also be very helpful in managing issues that arise during and after your treatment and provide care for you closer to home when possible.

### **Will I see my oncologist in the same room at every visit?**

You may see your oncologist in a different room at each appointment; therefore, it is necessary to check in at the Reception Desk.

### **Can I see my oncologist without an appointment?**

Unfortunately, we do not have a walk-in clinic. All appointments need to be pre-booked. Please refer to the contact list on **page 34** for who to call if you need help.

### **How can I email BC Cancer or my oncologist?**

BC Cancer does not have a general email address for clinical or appointment queries. Please discuss the options for email contact with your specific oncologist. Please do not use the "Contact Us" form on the BC Cancer website as that is for general enquiries only. To reach a BC Cancer medical professional or to make an appointment, use the numbers on the contact list on **page 34**.

### **What if I need to change or confirm an appointment?**

To change or confirm an appointment please see the contact list on **page 34**.

### **How can I arrange to refill my prescription?**

Call the Pharmacy where your prescription was filled (BC Cancer Pharmacy or local). If refills are not available, please call your oncologist's secretary.

### **Why is there a wait between my lab (blood draw) and my oncologist appointment?**

It may take several days for your oncologist to receive the results of your blood work.

### **Can I smoke at the centre?**

BC Cancer and grounds are strictly a “non-smoking” environment. Patients may use medicinal cannabis extracts for symptom management on BC Cancer premises, but smoking and vaporization are not permitted.

### **Can I use a cell phone at the centre?**

You may use your cell phone, but we ask that you put it in vibrate mode while at the centre. Please do not use cell phones in the consultation areas and do not take pictures or record others to maintain privacy.

### **Can I wear scent?**

BC Cancer is a Scent Free environment. In consideration of other patients and staff who have scent related allergies kindly refrain from wearing perfume, scented hairspray, cologne, scented deodorant, aftershave or other scented products. Thank you for your cooperation.

### **Can I bring my pet?**

Kindly do not bring pets into the centre. Only guide dogs are permitted.

### **Where can I find more information online?**

The BC Cancer website offers a wealth of information for patients and the public. Please visit [www.bccancer.bc.ca](http://www.bccancer.bc.ca)

### **How can I provide feedback?**

One of the core values that guides our work across BC Cancer is putting the needs of our patients first. You can help us honour this value and improve our services by providing your feedback – good or bad. Compliments and complaints are best delivered by speaking directly with the person who provided the service or to the manager of the area at the time and place they occur.

### **Other options for providing feedback are:**

- Patient comment cards available in the lobbies on the first and second floors of the BC Cancer – Victoria centre and on our website at: [www.bccancer.bc.ca/our-services/centres-clinics/bc-cancer-victoria](http://www.bccancer.bc.ca/our-services/centres-clinics/bc-cancer-victoria)
- Contacting a member of administration (see contact list on **page 34**)
- Contacting the PHSA Patient Care Quality Office:  
Call toll-free **1.888.875.3256** or email: [pcqo@phsa.ca](mailto:pcqo@phsa.ca)

## How can I be involved?

The BC Cancer Patient Experience Program supports person-centered care. Health services are most effective when they are flexible and responsive to the needs and values of the person receiving care. We welcome patients and families to help us improve cancer care. You can become a patient or family partner. A patient and family partner can be a current or former patient, a caregiver, family member, or loved one who has experience with cancer care. They are volunteers who are trained and supported to engage with health professionals to improve cancer care. Patient and family partners may participate in consultations, committees and working groups to represent the voice of patients and families.

We invite you to get involved with patient and family experience at BC Cancer by joining our Network of Patient & Family Partners or one of our committees.

Please contact Patient Experience at: [\*\*patientexp@bccancer.bc.ca\*\*](mailto:patientexp@bccancer.bc.ca)

# Where can I get information on Fair Pharmacare?

Patients at BC Cancer sometimes face significant drug costs associated with their treatment. Fair PharmaCare helps B.C. families pay for many prescription drugs, dispensing fees and some medical devices and supplies. The plan is based on income: the less a family earns, the more help they get. Partial reimbursement (up to 70%) above an annual deductible is available for registered individuals.

All B.C. citizens accessing health care must be registered with Fair Pharmacare. This is particularly important in order to receive any possible financial subsidies or assistance with prescription drugs.

## If you:

- Need to register;
- Are unsure if you are registered;
- Are unsure of your qualifications for a subsidy;
- Or if you are unsure what your deductible is

## You have three choices:

1) Ask: Your pharmacist.

2) Call: Health Insurance BC Inquiry Line  
(Mon-Fri 8a.m.–8p.m. and Sat 8a.m.–4p.m.):  
toll-free: **1.800.663.7100**

3) Visit: The Pharmacare website at:

**[https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/health-drug-coverage/  
pharmacare-for-bc-residents](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/health-drug-coverage/pharmacare-for-bc-residents)**

Register for Fair Pharmacare and check the status of your registration.

## For all of these options, you will need to provide your Care Card number

It is important to be aware of what Fair Pharmacare medical coverage you have and what your ID number is so that you can receive appropriate coverage.

# How is my personal data collected, used and shared?

When you are receiving care, treatment and services at BC Cancer, our staff and physicians will collect personal information from you. Where permitted, we may ask your family, friends, or other organizations to give us information about you (e.g. copies of records, medication information or test results). Your information may be entered into our electronic health information system to assist authorized persons in quickly accessing pertinent information wherever you may be receiving care or services.

We collect, use and share your personal information under the primary authority of the BC Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA). FIPPA and other legislation authorize us to use and share your personal information for these reasons:

- To identify you and keep in contact with you about your health care
- To provide ongoing care and support of your care activities
- To help us plan, monitor, maintain and improve our care and services
- For education and training (e.g. medical students) and to conduct research with your consent or as permitted by law
- To know your eligibility for benefits and services and to arrange medical services billing
- To enable parties (e.g. Ministry of Health Services, Canadian Institute of Health Information) to confirm your identity, conduct planning and improvement activities, measure performance and fund health care
- To analyze, manage and control disease outbreaks and monitor the overall health of people
- As required by law (e.g. court order, reportable conditions) and as authorized by FIPPA

Your health information will be provided to your referring physician, other authorized health care professionals and their support staff, or health care agencies and facilities involved in your care to support continuous and consistent care and service. In some cases, these health professionals may look up your health information in our electronic health information systems in order to provide you with direct or supporting services.

Requests for access to your health record can be made by contacting Health Information Management (Health Records) at BC Cancer – Victoria.

See contact information for Health Information Management (Health Records) on **page 35**.

## eHealth and your information

eHealth is a provincial initiative that allows certain aspects of your health information to be accessed by authorized health care professionals throughout the province and not just within a particular region. Each health authority sends specific health information to a province-wide electronic information system, where it is stored with strict protections and used for limited and authorized purposes. For more information about eHealth, please visit the government eHealth website at [www.health.gov.bc.ca/ehealth](http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/ehealth)



# Advance Care Planning

Advance Care Planning is the process of thinking about and writing down your wishes or instructions for present or future health care treatment in the event that you ever become unable to decide for yourself. You can make an advance care plan at any time. The best time to make one is when you are healthy enough to make these decisions. However, many people start thinking about advance care planning when they are diagnosed with cancer or another illness.

Advance Care Planning (ACP) involves understanding and sharing your values, beliefs and wishes regarding health and personal care with those close to you and your health-care provider. It also involves determining who would make health-care decisions for you if you cannot. This information is used during conversations with health-care providers about the treatments and care you receive, to help you get the care that's right for you. (BC Centre for Palliative Care).

If you already have an Advanced Care Plan, consider sharing it with your oncologist. If you do not have one, do not hesitate to talk to your care team at BC Cancer about your wishes and values.

See the following resources that are available to learn more:

## **1. BC Cancer website ([www.bccancer.bc.ca](http://www.bccancer.bc.ca))**

This website has resources that can be accessed by searching the term "advance care planning" or "My Voice Advanced Care Planning Guide" in the search box.

The BC Cancer Patient & Family Counselling program offers counselling services to cancer patients and family members. See page 35 for contact information.

## **2. BC Centre for Palliative Care**

The BC Centre for Palliative Care provides leadership for best practices, research and education in advance care planning, serious illness conversations, integration of a palliative approach to care, and building compassionate communities.

To learn more about advanced care planning, including information, further resources and events around the province visit: [www.bc-cpc.ca/acp](http://www.bc-cpc.ca/acp)

## **3. Nidus Personal Planning Resource Centre and Registry**

Nidus is a non-profit charity, personal planning centre and registry.

For more information visit: [www.nidus.ca](http://www.nidus.ca)

# Glossary of terms

## **Benign Tumour**

An abnormal swelling or growth that is not a malignant or spreading cancer and is usually harmless.

## **Biopsy**

The surgical removal of a piece of tissue from a patient for microscopic examination.

## **Brachytherapy**

The use of radioactive “seed” implanted directly into a tumour. This allows a very high but sharply localized dose of radiation to be given to a tumour while sparing surrounding, healthy tissue from radiation exposure.

## **Cancer**

A large group of more than 100 diseases characterized by uncontrolled growth and spread of abnormal cells.

## **Carcinogen**

Any substance that causes cancer.

## **Carcinoma**

A form of cancer that arises in tissues that cover or line such organs as skin, intestines, uterus, lung and breast.

## **Chemotherapy**

Treatment of disease by chemical compounds.

## **Clinical Trials**

The process by which new cancer treatments are tested in humans. Clinical trials are conducted after experiments in animals and preliminary studies in humans have shown that a new treatment method is likely to be effective.

## **Computerized Tomography (CT) Scan**

A technique providing multiple cross-sectional X-ray images generated by computer. A CT scan can provide valuable information such as the presence, size, and location of a tumour and its impact on surrounding tissue.

## **Grade of Cancer**

Describes the appearance of cancer cells under the microscope, and their degree of difference from normal cells.

## **Hormone Therapy**

A treatment in which hormones (as well as anti-hormones and other factors which regulate the endocrine glands) are used to fight some cancers of the breast, endometrium and prostate.

## **Lymph Gland (Node)**

Our bodies have a network of lymph vessels and lymph nodes. These glands or nodes act as filters for impurities in the body and concentrate lymphocytes used to fight infection. Cancer can start in these nodes or spread to them.

### **Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)**

A procedure that produces cross-sectional images of the body without the use of X-rays or radioactive materials. MRI uses a strong magnetic field, radio waves and a computer to produce excellent soft tissue images that can be read by a radiologist.

### **Mammography**

An X-ray examination of the breasts using specialized equipment.

### **Metastasis**

The process whereby cancer cells from the original tumour spreads to other sites in the body.

### **Positron Emission Tomography (PET) Functional Imaging**

PET is an imaging procedure that requires the use of safe injectable tracers to help detect certain diseases, such as cancer, in the body. When combined with Computed Tomography (CT), this medical technology enables improved diagnosis of disease and enhanced treatment planning allowing for the most appropriate and effective choice of therapy.

### **Radiation Therapy**

The use of radiation (high-energy rays) to kill or shrink tumour cells. Used to treat some cancers.

### **Stage of Cancer**

There are two systems used together to classify cancer. TNM is a type of classification used to describe the extent of the cancer's involvement in your body based on tumour (site and size), node (involvement of lymph nodes), and metastasis (spread). The second classification used is Spread of Cancer which uses a 1-4 scale system to describe the location of the cancer in your body.

### **Stem Cells**

The immature cells from which all blood cells develop. These cells may divide to form more stem cells or mature into a variety of blood cell types.

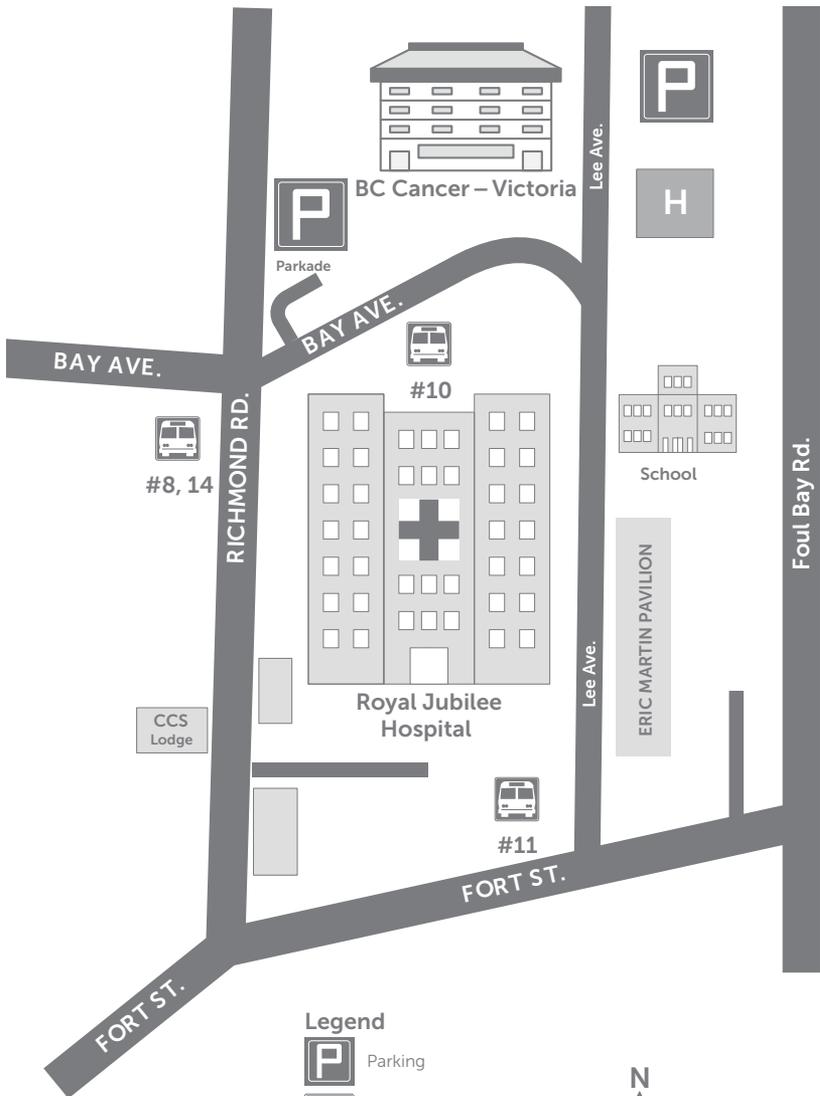
### **Tumour Group**

Groups of medical specialists at BC Cancer who set cancer treatment policies and protocols for the various types of tumour sites, e.g. prostate, breast, colorectal cancer.

### **Tumour Markers**

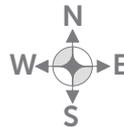
Substances which provide a test for the presence of actively growing cancer; not recommended for early detection or screening of cancer but used at BC Cancer to indicate whether a particular treatment has reduced the size of a known tumour, or whether a tumour is growing.

# BC Cancer – Victoria Location Map



## Legend

-  Parking
-  Bus Stop
-  Building
-  Helipad
-  Canadian Cancer Society Lodge



# BC Cancer – Victoria contact list

For our main reception, call: **250.519.5500**

or our toll free number: **1.800.670.3322**

Additional information can be found at: [www.bccancer.bc.ca](http://www.bccancer.bc.ca)

**Please call the centre Monday to Friday, except for holidays.** If our line is busy, you will be connected to voice mail. Please leave a message stating your name, your BC Cancer ID #, and a brief description of your reason for calling, and we will return your call as soon as possible. Departmental hours vary.

## Medical Concerns

Concern	Number
BC Residents for general health information and advice from a nurse, pharmacist or dietitian	<b>811</b>
Telephone Nurse Line: To talk to a nurse about treatment, side effects or other cancer related problems	<b>250.519.5596</b>
Chemotherapy prescription refills or to speak to a pharmacist for information about your drug therapy	<b>250.519.5510</b>
All other medical problems	<b>Call your family doctor</b>

For **URGENT** medical concerns **after 4:30 pm weekdays, all WEEKEND and STAT HOLIDAYS**, call the Royal Jubilee Hospital at **250.370.8000** and ask for the Radiation or Medical Oncologist on call.

## Appointments

In order to address your concerns effectively, including to receive test results, an appointment is required to see a physician or nurse. Please contact the following numbers for appointment information or changes.

Type of Appointment	Number
All doctors	<b>250.519.5707</b>

## Support Services

Service	Number
Health Information Management (Health Records)	<b>250.519.5589</b>
Indigenous Patient Navigator	<b>250.889.5145</b>
Library	<b>250.519.5517</b>
Nutrition and Speech Language Pathology	<b>250.519.5770</b>
Patient & Family Counselling	<b>250.519.5525</b>

## Administration

To contact Administration, call **250.519.5501**

### Address:

BC Cancer – Victoria  
Administration Office  
2410 Lee Avenue  
Victoria, B.C.  
V8R 6V5

# Notes:









Provincial Health Services Authority

## BC Cancer Centres

### Abbotsford

32900 Marshall Road  
Abbotsford, B.C. V2S 0C2  
604.851.4710 or toll-free 1.877.547.3777

### Prince George—Centre for the North

1215 Lethbridge Street  
Prince George, B.C. V2M 7E9  
250.645.7300 or toll-free 1.855.775.7300

### Surrey

13750 96 Avenue  
Surrey, B.C. V3V 1Z2  
604.930.2098 or toll-free 1.800.523.2885

### Kelowna—Sindi Ahluwalia Hawkins Centre

399 Royal Avenue  
Kelowna, B.C. V1Y 5L3  
250.712.3900 or toll-free 1.888.563.7773

### Vancouver

600 West 10th Avenue  
Vancouver, B.C. V5Z 4E6  
604.877.6000 or toll-free 1.800.663.3333

### Victoria

2410 Lee Avenue  
Victoria, B.C. V8R 6V5  
250.519.5500 or toll-free 1.800.670.3322

### BC Cancer Research

675 West 10th Avenue  
Vancouver, B.C. V5Z 1L3  
604.675.8000 or toll-free 1.888.675.8001

### BC Cancer Foundation

150–686 W. Broadway  
Vancouver, B.C. V5Z 1G1  
604.877.6040 or toll-free 1.888.906.CURE/2873