

# Fear of blood cancer progression or recurrence



**After a blood cancer diagnosis, the words people most want to hear are 'You are in remission' or 'You are cancer free.'**

For some people, the sense of uncertainty they felt at diagnosis stays with them long after treatment ends. This can impact on health, relationships, future plans, and enjoyment of life. At worst, it may impact making future life decisions because of what we fear might happen.

**The quiet fear of cancer coming back can hide in plain sight and may be experienced as:**

- Ongoing feelings of worry
- Intrusive thoughts that won't go away
- Changing how often you have medical tests or appointments
- Being overly focussed on bodily symptoms e.g. fatigue / pain / changes to digestion
- Using alcohol, prescription or non-prescription drugs to feel better
- Changes in mood, e.g. becoming irritable, withdrawn or feeling low

## **Questions to consider:**

- What is your fear if your cancer was to progress or recur?
- Are there certain situations that make your fear stronger?
- What patterns do you notice when you feel fearful? e.g. physical symptoms, emotions or thoughts.
- What ways have you found to enjoy life despite uncertainty?
- What can I control or influence?



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## Helpful hints and tips:

- Recognise fear is a common reaction
- Notice what feeds your fear
- Focus on what you can control  
e.g. attending check-ups / maintaining healthy routines
- Use reliable information sources from credible organisations
- Create a 'worry window' – limit worry time to a set period to prevent fear taking over
- Practice a form of relaxation
- Stay connected – talk to a trusted person or professional
- Challenge worst-case thinking – ask yourself:  
“What is most likely?” or “What else could be true?”
- Maintain daily routines – structure and familiar activities help reduce uncertainty
- Engage in activities you enjoy
- Look after your body – with good sleep / food / movement
- Celebrate small wins and focus on living

## Resources

Click on each resource to follow the link

[Leukaemia Foundation Webinar  
Fear of cancer recurrence](#)

[Fear of the cancer returning  
Cancer Council](#)

[Fear of cancer  
recurrence or progression  
Peter MacCallum  
Cancer Centre](#)

**Leukaemia  
Foundation**



**'You beat cancer by how you  
live, why you live and the  
manner in which you live.'**

**- Stuart Scott**



**For more information, go to the  
Leukaemia Foundation website  
or call 1800 620 420.**