

Tips

Psycho-oncology support

The physical changes caused by the disease and its treatment may seem unbearable.

Talking to a psycho-oncologist or undergoing cognitive-behavioural therapy can help you learn to accept the physical changes.

Couple therapy can also help you get through a difficult period in your relationship.

Ask your treatment team for a recommendation

Additional offers

Free make-up workshops «Look good feel better»

Programme for those affected: «Learning to live with cancer»

Further information on this topic

Selection of brochures from the Swiss Cancer League:

- «Cancer therapy has changed my appearance»
- «Male sexuality in cancer»
- «Female sexuality in cancer»
- «Physical activity in cancer»

New body image




Good to know

Cancer can cause a variety of physical changes as a result of the disease and its treatment. These include changes in appearance (e.g. hair loss, scarring, weight loss, weight gain), sensory changes (e.g. pain, numbness) or functional problems (e.g. difficulty swallowing, difficulty speaking, erectile dysfunction). Some changes are temporary, while others may last a long time or stay forever.

You may feel that your body no longer belongs to you because of these changes, and you may feel bad about yourself. Sometimes you isolate yourself for this reason or give up activities you'd like to do. These are normal reactions that other people with cancer also experience. The process of adapting to a changed body sensation is individual and may take more or less time.



New body image

You feel...	Or you notice...	What you can do for yourself...
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You consider your physical changes to be insignificant You manage to get used to physical changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take time for yourself. Continue to take part in activities you enjoy (for example, sports or social activities). Talk about your feelings, needs, wishes and limitations. This can help to avoid misunderstandings among those around you.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You find it hard to accept physical changes You find it hard to look at yourself in the mirror 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specialists (e.g. physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists) can help you in your everyday life despite your limitations. Talk to trusted members of your treatment team about your feelings and physical changes. The treatment team or the Cancer League can give you the contact details of professionals who specialise in counselling people affected by cancer. Therapies such as music, painting or sport can help you to develop a new body image. The treatment team and/or the cantonal or regional Cancer League can provide you with addresses on this subject.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You can't accept physical changes You feel you have no control over your body You are ashamed and inhibited 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact the treatment team.