

Managing Cognitive Changes

How Cognitive Rehabilitation Therapy can help.



The link between cognitive dysfunction and cancer

It is estimated that more than 45% of patients experience a decline in cognitive function after completion of cancer treatment. There are several factors that can attribute to this side effect including the type of cancer being treated, the type of treatment received, age, and other health-related factors, and these cognitive changes may start during or after cancer treatment. Some people notice very small changes, such as a bit more difficulty remembering things, whereas others have much greater memory or concentration problems. This can sometimes be described as a mental fog or “chemo brain.”

The most common reported symptoms of cancer-related cognitive dysfunction are:

- Short-term memory loss
- Difficulty concentrating and/or shortened attention span
- Difficulty with word finding and verbal fluency
- Problem solving difficulties
- Struggling to multitask
- Difficulty organizing, planning or starting a task
- Delayed processing, storing and/or retrieving information
- Mental and physical fatigue

How Cognitive Rehabilitation Therapy can help

Baptist MD Anderson Cancer Center offers cognitive rehabilitation through our dedicated occupational therapists and speech language pathologists who will help you develop strategies to improve your cognitive abilities and performance, improve your ability to complete everyday activities, create an individualized plan that equips you to better manage your symptoms and identify ways to improve your overall health and well being. The therapists will work with your medical care team to help determine if any further evaluation is needed to identify underlying medical conditions, such as dementia, that may be causing your symptoms.

Studies show that rehabilitation can improve the following:

- Concentration
- Memory
- Processing speed
- Organization and multitasking
- Word finding

How to request an appointment

We strive to provide optimal rehabilitation and improve your quality of life through specialized, compassionate treatment and through education. Speak with your Baptist MD Anderson Cancer Center provider by calling **904.202.7300** to learn more about how cognitive rehabilitation can benefit you and to request a referral.

**Physician referral is required for all rehabilitation, except for self-pay massage therapy.*

