

What does Saint Anne's Senior Adult Oncology program include?

Deciding on a plan of care involves input from the Senior Adult Oncology team, as well as the patient and, if desired, family members.

A typical consultation with the Senior Adult Oncology Program team includes:

- medical evaluation by our oncologist-geriatrician
- visits with a specially trained registered nurse and social worker who assess the patient's physical functioning and ability to carry out activities of daily living
- a simple mobility test, called "Get Up and Go," which checks the patient's risk of falling

A consultation also may include depression screening, nutritional assessment, brief cognitive assessment, and a review of medications. These combined screenings and assessments are used to estimate the patient's prognosis and risk of complications and side effects during treatment.

Discussion of a patient's personal preferences is an important part of this evaluation, too. On average, older patients may prefer treatments that may lead to a better quality of life, rather than a treatment that may increase the quantity of life by a few weeks or months at the cost of more side effects.

Referring patients to the Senior Adult Oncology Program

Patients may be referred to Saint Anne's Senior Adult Oncology Program by their primary care provider or surgeon, or any provider involved in the care of a patient with a recent cancer diagnosis.

Senior Adult Oncology Program CANCER CARE FOR OLDER ADULTS



Saint Anne's Hospital Regional Cancer Center

Nationally accredited with commendation by the Commission on Cancer of the American College of Surgeons as a Community Hospital Comprehensive Cancer Program

Accredited in radiation oncology by the American College of Radiology



We welcome questions about our program.

To learn more:

Contact our Oncology
Nurse Navigator:
508-235-5388

Or visit

[www.saintannahospital.org/
Senior-Adult-Oncology](http://www.saintannahospital.org/Senior-Adult-Oncology)

Saint Anne's Hospital

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795 Middle Street, Fall River, MA 02721

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FACT: Sixty percent of new cancer patients are over age 65.

Caring for older adults with a cancer diagnosis

Older adults requiring cancer care often have needs unlike their younger counterparts. They may have additional health conditions, such as cardiovascular disease or diabetes, which can impact their treatment. They may be physically frailer and less able to keep up with daily activities. Or they may be less independent because of physical limitations, memory problems or depression, or live alone without a strong support system.

These factors describe what health care professionals call a person's functional age. Rather than chronologic age, which measures only a person's years, functional age reflects an individual's physical abilities, their ability to perform activities of daily living, and other health conditions related to aging that may affect their medical care. These are important considerations in caring for patients with a cancer diagnosis.

The Senior Adult Oncology Program of Saint Anne's Hospital Regional Cancer Center

To meet the needs of older patients, the Senior Adult Oncology Program of Saint

FACT: The median age of all cancer patients is now 71.

Anne's Hospital Regional Cancer Center helps to ensure that patients receive the best treatment plan. This means developing a plan not only to treat their cancer, but also to minimize side effects and potential complications that can occur more frequently in older adults with cancer.

A Team of Experts

Saint Anne's Senior Adult Oncology Program brings together expert clinicians to ensure that all aspects of care – from health and independence, to expectations regarding possible treatment – are considered. Our team includes:

- a medical oncologist who also is a board-certified geriatrician. This means that the doctor specializes in caring for cancer patients as well as older patients.
- oncology-certified registered nurses
- social workers to assist patients and families with support and resources
- a nurse navigator who assists with referrals and access to care

FACT: The risk of developing cancer increases with age.

- a pharmacist who reviews possible drug interactions and effects of chemotherapy
- registered dietitian to ensure optimal nutrition before, during and after treatment



The art of caring.

The science of healing.

- outreach program coordinator who is certified as a senior fitness and cancer exercise specialist

Each plays a vital role in caring for the older patient, from diagnosis through treatment and beyond.