Partnering You
In Your Journey Through Cancer

What every new patient needs to know

National Cancer Centre Singapore
SingHealth
Contents

CONSULTATION
What You Need for Your First Visit 06
Making and Changing Your Appointment 07
Location of NCCS and How to Get Here 08
Our Specialist Oncology Clinics 09
Summary of Patient's Class Status Based on Referral Status 10
Charges and Billing Enquiries 11
Getting Your Medical Reports 15

INVESTIGATIVE SERVICES
Phlebotomy Services 17
General X-ray 18
Computerised Tomography (CT) Scan 18
CT Colonography 18
Magnetic Resonance Imaging 19
Mammography 20
Ultrasound 21
Mammotome / Vacuum Breast Biopsy 21
Biopsy 21
Endoscopy 22
Getting Your Results 23

TREATMENT SERVICES
– A Multi-disciplinary Approach to Cancer Treatment
Chemotherapy 26
Hormone Therapy 28
Surgery 28
Radiation Therapy 31
Supportive and Palliative Care Services 33

SUPPORT SERVICES
Pharmacy 35
Patient/Caregiver Support and Counselling Services 36
Cancer Education and Information Service 37
Essential Information 39

MAKING AN INFORMED CHOICE
The National Cancer Centre Singapore (NCCS) has been serving patients for more than two decades. During this time, our medical specialists, scientists and nursing staff have built up our knowledge and experience in dealing with the different types of cancer. Our oncologists are not only trained to specialise in the different cancer types but also to sub-specialise in the different body parts to treat cancer.

Much of what we have achieved is because of our focused efforts in carrying out clinical and translational research. This has enabled us to better understand the disease so that we are able to provide patients with better medical diagnosis, treatment and care. Hence, at NCCS, our patients benefit from our wide resources for support during treatment and beyond, from psychosocial counselling, nutritional help to patient support group services.

As a national cancer centre, NCCS has grown as a centre of excellence in the treatment of cancer not only in Singapore but also in the region. We share our expertise by training other doctors in the region.

This booklet aims to be a handy guide in your journey with NCCS. It provides general information about our facilities, services, the treatment options available, patient pathways, and how you can find support and assistance. Most importantly, it shows how you, as a patient, can play an essential role in managing and coping with cancer.

We understand that no two cancers are the same. Our teams of oncologists, nurses and support staff will be with you to provide customised care and assistance at every stage of your treatment. Throughout your contact with NCCS, you will experience our dedicated service and patient care as we partner you in your journey to recovery.

Associate Professor William Hwang
Medical Director
National Cancer Centre Singapore
A Multi-disciplinary and Holistic Approach to Managing Cancer

NCCS is a national and regional centre providing a full spectrum of services to treat different types of cancer. The Centre treats almost 65 per cent of the public sector oncology cases.

At NCCS, patients have the advantage of getting all the multi-disciplinary services in one location. Our patients can get the best from our oncologists who do appropriate cross consultation and develop sub-speciality expertise for different cancer types. Our specialists also have regular tumour board meetings to discuss about cancer diagnosis and various treatment options to improve prognosis and long-term survival of cancer patients. This means our patients will be able to receive customised treatment from a team of oncologists in one visit.

In addition to quality treatment and patient care, our researchers and clinician scientists actively carry out research and clinical trials to get better insights and deepen our knowledge on the different cancers for the benefit of our patients.
What You Need For Your First Visit

To prepare for your appointment:

• If you have been requested to perform any tests or scans, please complete them before your appointment.
• If you are required to fast before your appointment, please follow the specific instructions that were shared with you.
• If you need help, please call 6436 8000 during office hours.

Please bring the following documents:

1. NRIC or Birth Certificate (if you are under 15)
2. Passport and Employment Pass / Work Permit (if you are a foreigner)
3. Medical Benefit Cards e.g. Civil Service Card / Public Service Card / Letter of Guarantee (if any)
4. Referral letter written by your doctor
5. Any other medical reports / biopsy results / X-ray films etc

If there are any changes in your address or phone number, it is important to inform our counter staff upon registration to ensure that we are able to contact you promptly.
Making and Changing Your Appointment

For general enquiries related to:
• Making and changing appointments, cancelling appointments;
• Location of clinics; and
• Contacting doctors

Please call (65) 6436 8088 or fax your request to (65) 6324 3548, or email callcentre@nccs.com.sg.
You may also view, change or cancel your doctor’s appointment directly using:
A. The Health Buddy mobile app (from iTunes App Store or Google Play)
B. Online at www.singhealth.com.sg/PatientCare/appointments

1. Operating Hours for NCCS Appointment Centre
Mondays to Fridays: 8.30am to 5.30pm
Saturdays: 8.30am to 12.30pm

Our Call Centre is closed on Sundays and Public Holidays.

In case of an emergency (after NCCS’ operating hours), please proceed to Singapore General Hospital (SGH), Accident and Emergency (A&E) Department, Blk 1, Level 2.

2. Operating Hours for Clinics
Mondays to Fridays: 8.00am to 6.00pm
Saturdays: 8.00am to 12.30pm

Our clinics are closed on Sundays and Public Holidays.
## Location of NCCS

![Map of NCCS location]

### Getting to NCCS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bus Stop</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Bus Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B1: 10039</td>
<td>Kg Bahru Rd (Before Hospital Drive)</td>
<td><strong>SBS Transit:</strong> 124, 143, 147, 166, 196, 197&lt;br&gt;<strong>SMRT:</strong> 61, 167, 961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2: 10017</td>
<td>Before Outram Rd</td>
<td><strong>SBS Transit:</strong> 124, 143, 147, 166, 197&lt;br&gt;<strong>SMRT:</strong> 61, 961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B3: 10018</td>
<td>New Bridge Rd Bus Terminal</td>
<td><strong>SBS Transit:</strong> 2, 12, 54, 62, 103, 174, 196, 121&lt;br&gt;<strong>SMRT:</strong> 61, 190, 520, 961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B4: 06011</td>
<td>Along Outram Rd (Opposite Outram Park MRT Station EW line)</td>
<td><strong>SBS Transit:</strong> 33, 63, 121&lt;br&gt;<strong>SMRT:</strong> 75, 851, 970</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Specialist Oncology Clinics

NCCS is organised into a number of multi-disciplinary Specialist Oncology Clinics (SOCs) to meet the specific needs of our patients. These include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clinic</th>
<th>Sub-Speciality Specific Clinic</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A &amp; B</td>
<td>Breast &amp; Gynaecological Cancers</td>
<td>Level 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Gastrointestinal Cancers (colorectal, gastric, liver and stomach)</td>
<td>Level 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Genitourinary Cancers (bladder, kidney, prostate and testicular)</td>
<td>Level 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Head and Neck Cancers</td>
<td>Level 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Lung Cancers</td>
<td>Level 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Lymphoma and Sarcoma</td>
<td>Level 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Neuro-oncology</td>
<td>Level 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Palliative Medicine</td>
<td>Level 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Multi-disciplinary Clinics

Clinic E, NCCS, Level 3
NCCS Clinic F @ NHCS, Level 2

These two multi-disciplinary clinics cover cancer care for Breast, Head and Neck, Lymphoma, Colorectal and Gynaecology. Pre-operative care, counselling and blood taking are support services which are consolidated at one location.

Our SOC nurses are also trained to provide services to patients such as dressings, administration of injections and other simple medical procedures.
Summary of Patient’s Class Status Based on Referral Status

Outpatient will be classified as private or subsidised patients based on the following criteria:

1. **Classified as a private patient if first visit is via:**
   - Self-Referral
   - Referral letter from General Practitioner (GP)
   - Referral letter from a Private Hospital
   - Referral letter from a Restructured Hospital under private status and/or specifying a consultant by name
   - Referral letter from a Polyclinic and specifying a consultant by name
   - Discharge from inpatient paying class ward

   All foreign residents and non-residents will be classified as private patients.

2. **Classified as a subsidised patient if first visit is via:**
   - Referral letter from a Restructured Hospital under subsidised status, Polyclinic or SAF without specifying a specialist by name
   - Referral letter from a participating CHAS General Practitioners (GP) without specifying a specialist by name. Patient would be a CHAS holder at the point of referral
   - Discharge from inpatient subsidised class ward without specifying a specialist by name

   Subsidy is only applicable for Singapore Citizens and Permanent Residents, who are not existing private patients for the same medical condition.
Charges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Senior Consultant</th>
<th>Consultant</th>
<th>Senior Registrar/Registrar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONSULTATION FEES FOR FIRST VISIT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG Citizen – Private</td>
<td>S$149.80</td>
<td>S$133.75</td>
<td>S$118.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG Citizen – Subsidised</td>
<td>S$36.00</td>
<td>S$36.00</td>
<td>S$36.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR – Private</td>
<td>S$149.80</td>
<td>S$133.75</td>
<td>S$118.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR – Subsidised</td>
<td>S$54.00</td>
<td>S$54.00</td>
<td>S$54.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Resident</td>
<td>S$149.80</td>
<td>S$133.75</td>
<td>S$118.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non – Resident</td>
<td>S$164.78</td>
<td>S$147.66</td>
<td>S$130.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FOLLOW-UP VISITS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG Citizen – Private</td>
<td>S$108.07</td>
<td>S$85.60</td>
<td>S$72.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG Citizen – Subsidised</td>
<td>S$36.00</td>
<td>S$36.00</td>
<td>S$36.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR – Private</td>
<td>S$108.07</td>
<td>S$85.60</td>
<td>S$72.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR – Subsidised</td>
<td>S$54.00</td>
<td>S$54.00</td>
<td>S$54.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Resident</td>
<td>S$108.07</td>
<td>S$85.60</td>
<td>S$72.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non – Resident</td>
<td>S$118.77</td>
<td>S$94.16</td>
<td>S$80.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note:
The above charges are only applicable to the Specialist Oncology Clinics. These prices are indicative of general consultation charges. All charges are inclusive of 7% GST. Charges are effective from 18 December 2017 and may be subject to changes, if necessary.

Billing Enquiries

For billing enquiries, please call the Business Office at (65) 6436 8221.

Medisave

You may use Medisave to pay for hospitalisation or certain outpatient expenses incurred by you or your immediate family members (spouse, parent and grandparent who is a Singapore Citizen or Permanent Resident and child aged above 18 years).

To be eligible, the immediate family member must be an active Medisave contributor, have the prevailing Medisave Minimum Sum and be aged 55 years old or below. You can use Medisave to pay for hospitalisation, day surgeries and certain costly outpatient treatments including chemotherapy and radiotherapy.
Medisave covers:
- Ward accommodation
- Medicines
- Rehabilitative services
- Surgical operation fee
- Radiotherapy
- Doctor’s attendance fees
- Investigations
- Medical supplies
- Chemotherapy
- Implants and prostheses required during surgery, etc

For medical/surgical inpatient cases, Medisave covers up to S$450 per day for daily hospital charges (patient must stay in hospital for at least 8 hours unless he/she is admitted for day surgery). This includes a maximum of S$50 for doctor’s daily attendance fees.

For approved day surgeries, Medisave covers up to S$300 per day for daily hospital charges.

For surgical operations (inpatient and day surgery), the amount claimable varies according to the complexity of the operation. Please approach Listing Room, Level 2, Patient Care Services for enquiries.

For the following outpatient treatments, Medisave coverage is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Treatment</th>
<th>Medisave Withdrawal Limits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Radiotherapy for cancer patients</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- External Radiotherapy</td>
<td>S$80 per treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Brachytherapy with external radiotherapy</td>
<td>S$300 per treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Brachytherapy without external radiotherapy</td>
<td>S$360 per treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Superficial X-ray</td>
<td>S$30 per treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Stereotactic radiotherapy</td>
<td>S$2,800 per treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemotherapy for cancer patients</td>
<td>Maximum S$1,200 per 21/28 days cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MRI, CT scans and diagnostics related to neoplasm treatment</td>
<td>S$600 per patient per year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approved health screening</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Mammogram for female patients aged 50 and above</td>
<td>S$400 per Medisave Account Holder per year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Colonoscopy for patients aged 50 and above</td>
<td>Up to S$1,850 (depending on colonoscopy procedures)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Medishield / Medisave Approved Integrated Plan**

Medishield is a basic medical insurance that helps Central Provident Fund (CPF) members and their dependants meet large hospitalisation bills. Additional insurance coverage for treatment in Class A/B1 levels in restructured hospitals or treatment in private hospitals can be obtained by purchasing a Medisave-approved enhancement plan offered by a private insurer.

If you are covered under Medishield/Medisave-approved integrated plans at the time of your hospitalisation/treatment, you may claim part of your hospital bill from your plan by informing the staff handling your admission that you wish to make a Medishield/Medisave-approved integrated plan claim.

Non-Singaporeans who are covered by Medishield should inform the admission staff about their CPF account number.

The hospital will submit the Medishield/Medisave-approved integrated plan claim on your behalf to the CPF Board/Private insurer. After processing, the Board/Private Insurer will submit payment directly to the hospital. The remaining amount not covered by Medishield/Medisave-approved integrated plan may then be settled by patients, either with Medisave, cash or both.

For more information on Medisave/Medishield/Medisave approved integrated plans, you can refer to the Medisave/Medishield brochure. You can also contact the CPF Board at 1800-227 1188 (toll-free).

**Medifund**

Medifund is an endowment fund set up by the Government to help needy Singapore citizens who are unable to pay for their heavily subsidised medical care at restructured hospitals. The amount of help from Medifund depends on your financial circumstances and the charges incurred.
General Criteria for Medifund Assistance

You:

• Must be a Singapore citizen (does not apply to Permanent residents);
• Must be a subsidised patient;
• Have received treatment from a Medifund-approved institution;
• Have financial difficulties paying for your healthcare bills by yourself or with the help of your family despite receiving Government subsidies and drawing on other means of payments including MediShield Life/Integrated Plans, Medisave and cash;
• Have documentary proof of insufficient family income.

Your doctor will arrange for you to make an appointment to see our Medical Social Worker. You may also enquire with our Financial & Social Information Hotline at (65) 6436 8126 during office hours.
Getting Your Medical Reports

The types of reports available include insurance claims, ordinary medical report, day surgery report (if any), lab results and copy of medical certificate.

If you require a medical report, contact the medical report staff at National Cancer Centre Singapore, Medical Records Office, Level 1 (behind “A” Clinic), at (65) 6436 8784. A fee will be levied.
Investigative Services
During your first visit to the clinic, comprehensive imaging investigations may be conducted to accurately diagnose your condition and prescribe the right treatment. On subsequent visits to the clinic, your doctor may request that you undergo certain investigations for further diagnostic, treatment or monitoring purposes. However, not all patients require the same investigations.

Common investigations include:
- Phlebotomy Services
- General X-ray
- Computerised Tomography (CT) Scan
- CT Colonography
- Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)
- Mammography
- Ultrasound
- Mammatome / Vacuum Breast Biopsy
- Biopsy
- Endoscopy

**Phlebotomy Services**
Level 2, Patient Care Services, NCCS

**Please Note**
- Check with your doctor when you need to take your blood test so that the results are ready for review at your next appointment.
- You do not need to make an appointment for the blood test. Simply proceed to the counter with your blood test forms to obtain a queue number and make payment.
- You do not need to fast unless otherwise advised by your doctor.
- You can proceed to the respective clinic or treatment unit once your blood is taken.
- You can take your blood test and complete your CT scan (if required) together at B2.
General X-Ray

Please Note
• You do not need to make an appointment for an X-ray. Simply proceed to the counter at B2 with your X-ray request.

Computerised Tomography (CT) Scan

CT scan is an imaging technique that uses X-rays to create cross sectional pictures of the body with the aid of a computer.

The patient lies on a moving table/bed as it passes through a circular X-ray machine. CT scans take 5-10 minutes.

You must inform your doctor if you are pregnant. You should not have a CT scan if you are pregnant.

CT Colonography

CT colonography (CTC), also known as virtual colonoscopy, is a CT scan to look at the colon, or large bowel.

A CT scan is a specialised X-ray test during which the patient lies on a moving table/bed as it passes through a circular X-ray machine. In order to study the large bowel, dietary preparation is required, usually for 1–3 days before the scan. This is to cleanse the bowel, and involves taking a prescribed laxative, similar to having other large bowel tests, such as barium enema or colonoscopy.
The main purpose of CTC is to look for cancer, or polyps, in the large bowel. Polyps are growths arising from the surface of the colon that may grow into cancers of the colon. If a cancer or significant sized polyp is found, you will need to have another test, such as a colonoscopy to biopsy (take a small tissue sample) or remove a polyp.

CTC is also excellent for diagnosing diverticulitis (where pouches develop in the wall of the colon) or as an investigation if you have symptoms suggestive of bowel problems.

Another reason to have a CTC is if you have had a difficult or an incomplete conventional colonoscopy, when the whole bowel may not have been completely or confidently assessed.

You must inform your doctor if you are pregnant. You should not have a CTC if you are pregnant.

Magnetic Resonance Imaging

Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) is a type of scan that uses strong magnetic fields and radio waves to produce detailed images of the inside of the body. It does not involve radiation from x-rays to produce the images. An MRI scanner is a large tube that contains powerful magnets. You lie inside the tube during the scan. MRI scans vary from 30-60 minutes depending on what part of the body is being analysed and how many images are required.

It is important to stay as still as possible while in the MRI scanner. Any movement will distort the scanner and, therefore, the images produced will be blurry.

Some patients may need to have a contrast agent injected before the scan to improve diagnostic accuracy by highlighting certain issues, such as inflammation.

You must inform your physician if you have any drug allergy or metallic implants in your body.
Mammography

This is a low dose X-ray of the breasts. The mammographer will need to apply adequate compression on your breasts for optimal images. Our radiologists will compare your new images with prior images and complete a report. Together with physical breast examination, this has proven to be the safest and most effective method to screen for breast cancer.
Ultrasound

An ultrasound scan is a specialised procedure that uses high frequency sound waves to capture live images from the inside of your body. No ionising radiation is used for this.

Ultrasound is a useful way of examining various parts of the body such as the thyroid, breasts, liver, gall bladder, pancreas, spleen, kidneys, and uterus, including blood flow through arteries and veins.

Mammotome / Vacuum Assisted Breast Biopsy

Vacuum Assisted Biopsy makes early diagnosis of breast cancer easier by using a vacuum-assisted device to remove some tissue from the breast for microscopic examination. As it is minimally invasive as compared to open surgical biopsies, the patient experiences minimal pain as only a small skin puncture is made.

This procedure is three times more accurate than core needle biopsies in the diagnosis of conditions associated with early breast cancer.

Biopsy

Level 3, Operating Theatre, NCCS

A biopsy is a procedure where a sample tissue is removed from a lump or area of suspicious growth for histology.
An endoscopy is a procedure which allows the doctor to look into the body cavity through a thin flexible tube. We provide endoscopy services for examination of the colon (Colonoscopy) and the stomach (Gastroscopy).
Getting Your Results

Your oncologist will receive the results of your investigations conducted at NCCS or SGH. He/She will discuss the results with you during your next appointment.

Provision of the hard copies of results is available to you on your request only after your oncologist has discussed with you.
Treatment Services
A Multi-disciplinary Approach to Cancer Treatment
Normal cells grow, divide and replace themselves in an orderly manner. Under normal conditions, your body constantly replaces cells that are lost either naturally or through injury. However, sometimes our body is unable to balance the rate of cell loss with new cell formation. Some cells multiply out of control, and they may divide too rapidly and grow without any order. This uncontrolled growth may grow into a lump called a tumour.

The treatment recommended depends on factors such as age, health, cancer type, origin, severity and stage of cancer. Sometimes a combination of treatments may be used to adequately control the cancer.

With the advantages of our comprehensive and multidisciplinary care, we often combine different types of treatment to optimise results.

Even when a surgery is successful, small cancer cells may still escape from the primary tumour through the blood and settle elsewhere in the other organs. These are “micrometastases” that cannot be detected by conventional radiology scans. Post-surgery chemotherapy, which is injected into the veins and circulates within the body, is used to eradicate these cancer cells. While normal healthy cells are also destroyed in the process, this is not permanent. Healthy cells will recover after completion of a treatment and proper schedule of chemotherapy administration is adhered to.

Post-surgery radiotherapy may also be given to the site of the primary tumour to reduce risk of relapse at the site of surgery.
Chemotherapy

How Chemotherapy Works
Chemotherapy is the use of anti-cancer drugs to kill cancer cells and prevent them from reproducing themselves. Chemotherapy is given in cycles. Each cycle consists of a treatment period followed by a resting period. The resting period is to allow the body to recover before the next treatment cycle starts.

Customising Chemotherapy
The specific medicine or combination recommended, as well as the frequency of the treatment, depends on:
• the kind of cancer,
• its location,
• the person’s height and weight, and
• how quickly the healthy normal cells recover from the treatment.

Receiving Chemotherapy
Depending on your physician’s recommendations and the type of chemotherapy you are receiving, intravenous chemotherapy can be administered in the ward or the Ambulatory Treatment Unit (ATU) at Level 3, NCCS.

The counter staff at ATU will inform you of the date, time and venue for chemotherapy.

If it is your first time receiving intravenous chemotherapy, you will be given a Chemo Booklet (English or Chinese version), where you will learn more about the chemotherapy you will be receiving and their effects.
What You Can Expect

Patients may experience side effects, such as nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite, mouth sores or fatigue. Medication will usually be prescribed to minimise these effects. These side effects are usually temporary and will go away when treatment stops.

Chemotherapy may reduce the number of white blood cells which protect you from infections. Hence, it is essential that you monitor your temperature and symptoms carefully. If you develop a fever or any other side effects, contact us immediately (within NCCS operational hours) by calling the ATU Telephone Triage number (65) 6436 8132 or (65) 6436 8088 to book an appointment to see a doctor at the Chemotherapy Review Clinic (CRC) at Level 2. After operating hours, you may go to SGH Department of Emergency Medicine if you need immediate attention.
Hormone Therapy

Hormone therapy controls cancer by changing the hormonal environment. Hormones are distributed in the bloodstream and help to regulate and coordinate growth, metabolism and reproduction. Breast and prostate cancers respond well to hormone treatment. It is usually administered via oral medication.

Surgery

How Surgery Works

Almost all cancers are treated by surgery especially in the early stages. Surgery is the local treatment to remove the cancer. Tissue around the cancer and nearby lymph nodes may also be removed during the operation. Your surgeon will determine if you are an ideal candidate for surgery and the extent of your surgery.
Customising Surgery
Eligible patients:
• Usually have tumours confined to a specific area,
• Able to handle general anaesthesia, and
• Have been assessed to be suitable by a trained surgical oncologist.

Receiving Surgery
After you have decided to proceed with the operation based on your surgeon’s recommendation, you will be directed to the Listing Room - Room 10. Here, you will be advised on your operation, hospitalisation (if necessary), costs, date and time of operation, as well as the admission procedure. The surgery can be conducted in either SGH or NCCS. Any blood investigation that needs to be done will be done here.

As part of Pre-Admission Testing (PAT), general fitness tests will be conducted before surgery to check if you are able to handle anaesthesia.

Most major cancer operations require the patient to be hospitalised for a few days after surgery. You will be admitted either the night before or on the same morning of the operation.
**Surgery Patient Pathway**

1. **1st Consultation**
   - NCCS, SOC

2. **Investigations**
   - NCCS

3. **Schedule Operation Date**
   - NCCS, LR, L2

4. **Pre-Admission Testing**
   - SGH, PAT, Blk 3, L1

5. **Admitted for Operation**
   - SGH

6. **Operation**
   - SGH, OT, Blk 1, L3

7. **Discharged with next treatment appointment**

8. **2nd Consultation**
   - NCCS, SOC

---

**LEGEND**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NCCS</td>
<td>National Cancer Centre Singapore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SGH</td>
<td>Singapore General Hospital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC</td>
<td>Specialist Outpatient Clinic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAT</td>
<td>Pre-Admission Testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LR</td>
<td>Listing Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OT</td>
<td>Operating Theatre</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**What You Can Expect**

Your condition will be monitored in a post-operative recovery area on the first night after your surgery. You may experience some pain from the wound in the first few days after surgery. This can be relieved by medication and/or injections.

Certain operations can be conducted on an outpatient basis during the day. Patients will be monitored for a few hours in the recovery ward before they are discharged.

The time it takes to recover varies from patient to patient. Your oncologist may also refer you to physiotherapists or other healthcare professionals for further care. Most patients are well enough to be discharged before their stitches can be removed. A date will be arranged for removal of stitches as well as follow-up visits.
Radiation Therapy

How Radiation Therapy Works
Radiation therapy uses high energy X-rays to kill cancer cells or stop them from growing or spreading. Radiation is delivered only to a localised region. Although it can affect both cancer cells and normal cells, radiation treatment attempts to destroy more cancer cells and spare as many normal cells as possible.

Receiving Radiation Therapy
Your radiation oncologist will assess your condition and determine the best treatment option for you. We will arrange for you to come for pre-treatment planning before the start of a treatment course. Each treatment course is customised to ensure that radiation reaches the cancer, but with minimal amount of damage to the surrounding tissues.

Radiation treatment is usually given on an outpatient basis, 5 days a week, for several weeks depending on the type of cancer.

Radiation Therapy can be administered by:
- External Beam Therapy where radiation is directed from the treatment machine to a particular area of your body.
- Internal Radiation Therapy (Brachytherapy) where a small radioactive material is placed inside your body exactly or close to where the cancer is.
Radiation Therapy Patient Pathway

What You Can Expect

- You will not be radioactive during or after treatment. The treatment itself causes no pain.
- Side effects of radiation therapy depend on the part of body being treated as well as the treatment duration. They may develop over the weeks of treatment but are usually temporary and will improve gradually after completion of treatment.
- Your radiation oncologist will review you on a weekly basis and prescribe necessary medication if required.
Supportive and Palliative Care Services

Cancer patients may face a myriad of physical, emotional, and psychosocial issues related to the cancer itself and its treatment, which can potentially compromise their quality of life, if not addressed. Supportive and survivorship care encompasses various domains such as rehabilitation, nursing and allied health to help survivors achieve holistic normalcy after completion of cancer treatment, and assist in the management of any psychosocial impact the survivors may face.

Our interdisciplinary team in the Division of Supportive and Palliative Care provides integrated and coordinated care pathways and resources to patients, survivors, their families and caregivers across the cancer continuum - from diagnosis to end of life.

Our team conducts specialist clinics at NCCS and also undertakes ward-based consultative palliative care services for patients with cancer and advanced non-cancer conditions in Singapore General Hospital (SGH). In addition, we partner community services like Assisi Hospice and HCA Hospice Care to deliver quality palliative care in the community. All these services provide pain and symptom management, psychosocial support for both patients and families, and facilitate transition of care. With the support of the team, it is possible for patients with life limiting illness to enjoy a good quality of life.
Pharmacy

Specialist Outpatient (SOC) Pharmacy
Level 1, NCCS

Services
The pharmacy supplies mainly self-administered medication to patients. Other services that can be found at the pharmacy include:

- Counselling on prescribed medication such as the side effects and precautions to be taken.
- Counselling on the use of over-the-counter preparations such as vitamin and supplements, skin care, dental care, surgical, ostomy items, etc.
- Home delivery services of over-the-counter items and medications.
- Smoking cessation counselling.

Oncology Pharmacy
Level 3, NCCS

Services
The pharmacy specialises in drug preparation and dispensing of intravenous chemotherapy at the Ambulatory Treatment Unit (ATU), Level 3. Other services that can be found at the pharmacy include:

- Chemotherapy counselling and symptom management of adverse reaction to chemotherapy or other related medications.
- Medication Therapy Management (MTM) Service. MTM aims to review patients’ medications (including doctor prescribed and over-the-counter medications; herbal and nutritional supplements) and to counsel patients on safe and effective medication use.
- Pharmacy Review Service. Patient is referred to Pharmacy Review Service by the medical oncologist. The pharmacist manages chemotherapy side effects and reviews patient to ensure patient is well before proceeding with chemotherapy.
- Investigational Drug Service. Handling, dispensing and providing counselling of investigational drugs to patients enrolled in clinical trials.
- Supply of pre-medications to chemotherapy drugs like Docetaxel, Paclitaxel and Pemetrexed.
Patient / Caregiver Support and Counselling Services
Level 2, Patient Care Services/Psychosocial Oncology and Patient Support, NCCS

Services
The department offers a wide range of psychosocial services to help patients make informed and effective decisions, communicate well and bond with their loved ones, and maintain as normal a lifestyle as possible.

Services and programmes available include:
- Patient counselling on treatment, acceptance, lifestyle changes and interpersonal relationship issues.
- Family counselling on illness-related, grief and bereavement issues, as well as caregiver/ family support.
- Psychosocial services such as socio-emotional/ psychological assessment, managing sleep disorders, depression counselling for cancer patients with psychological issues, and sexuality counselling.
- Care-related services such as financial assistance, employment and schooling issues, and discharge planning.
- Other patient support programmes include psycho-education, support group, therapy group work, and training of Patient Ambassadors etc.

Contact Information
Department of Psychosocial Oncology
Tel: (65) 6436 8126 / 6436 8417
Fax: (65) 6227 2534

Department of Patient Support
Tel: (65) 6436 8668
Fax: (65) 6227 2534
Email: patientsupport@nccs.com.sg
The Cancer Education and Information Service (CEIS) is for anyone affected by cancer. The services provided include:

**CANCER HELPLINE**
The Cancer Helpline is a private, confidential and anonymous one-to-one information and counselling service manned by trained nurse counsellors. They are able to provide up-to-date information on symptoms, prevention, early detection, treatment and management of side effects. Services also include counselling, as well as emotional and psychological support in coping with cancer. Cancer patients can also be connected to health, welfare and cancer support services available in Singapore.

**WIG BANK**
If you are a patient of NCCS, you can borrow wigs from our Wig Bank. This service is complimentary, as we believe in helping you look good when you go through your treatments.

Service includes wig fitting and basic styling.

**PUBLIC EDUCATION SERVICES**
- Public forums: Held at regular intervals to provide information on various aspects of cancer, focusing on prevention, early detection, diet and healthy lifestyle.
- CancerWise workshops: Designed to empower individuals with comprehensive information on specific cancers, early detection and prevention. These workshops are kept to a small and comfortable size to facilitate optimal interaction of participants with the speakers.
- Cancer Awareness Health Talks: Conducted by the specialists and health educators from NCCS, these talks make information on the disease easily accessible to corporations, clubs, community centres, schools, etc.
• Cancer Education Bus: Designed and retrofitted with up to date cancer information on panels and multimedia platform, the bus serves as a mobile exhibition to reach out to the community and aims to create cancer awareness in an interactive way to educate the public on the various types of cancer, signs and symptoms, established screening programmes and ways to reduce cancer risks.

PUBLICATIONS
Cancer Information booklets are available at the Specialist Oncology Clinics and can be downloaded from NCCS website.

Contact Information
For Cancer Helpline, information and registration for public education services, as well as request for publications, please call the Cancer Helpline at (65) 6225 5655 or email to cancerhelpline@nccs.com.sg.

You can also download a copy of the publication from NCCS’ website at www.nccs.com.sg.