melanoma.
patients
australia

PATIENT GUIDE

Cancer Related Cognitive Impairment, Or Brain Fog

Brain fog after cancer is common, with some studies suggesting 60-75% of patients with cancer are affected. You are not imagining it, and you are not alone. With the right support and practical strategies, many people find ways to manage cancer Related Cognitive Impairment (CRCI) and continue doing the things that matter most to them.

Understanding Brain Fog After Cancer

If you have noticed changes in your memory, concentration or thinking since your cancer diagnosis or treatment, you are not alone.
Many people experience Cancer-Related Cognitive Impairment (CRCI), sometimes called brain fog or cancer fog.
CRCI is a common side effect of cancer and cancer treatment. It can affect your daily life, relationships and work, but there are ways to manage it and get support.

What does CRCI feel like?

Everyone's experience is different, but you might notice:

- Forgetting things more often
- Losing your train of thought
- Finding it harder to concentrate
- Taking longer to finish tasks
- Struggling to find the right words
- Feeling mentally tired or "foggy"
- Finding it harder to plan, organise, or make decisions

Some people notice these changes during treatment, while others notice them after treatment has finished.

It's real, and it's not your fault

Many people tell us that CRCI can be frustrating and upsetting. You may feel:

- Less confident than before
- Different from your usual self
- Concerned about work or study
- Frustrated by everyday tasks
- Worried that other people don't understand

These feelings are common. Even if medical tests don't show major changes, your experience is still real and important.

Need support now?

Melanoma Patients Australia services can help you understand and manage cancer-related brain fog. No referral is required, making it an easy first step if you're looking for advice, practical strategies, or support to stay engaged in daily activities, work, and life.

Call 1300 884 450

Get Help Now

What can help?

There is no single solution that works for everyone, but many people find that the following strategies help:

- Regular physical activity
- Good sleep habits
- Stress management
- Cognitive rehabilitation or brain-training programs
- Occupational therapy
- Counselling or psychological support
- Support from family, friends and colleagues.

You may also find it helpful to share this resource with a trusted family member or friend who can support you along the way.

Talk to your Melanoma Patients Australia nurse or healthcare team about what might be right for you.

Not Sure Where to Start?

Melanoma Patients Australia services can be a great first step. You do not need a referral, and support is available to help you understand what you're experiencing, explore practical strategies, and connect with additional services if needed.

Call 1300 884 450 **Get Help Now**

Whether your concerns are new or have been ongoing for some time, reaching out early can help you find the right support and prevent cognitive challenges from having a bigger impact on your day-to-day life.

Simple tips for everyday life

Try a few of these strategies:

- Use a diary, calendar, or phone reminders
- Write things down
- Keep important items in the same place
- Focus on one task at a time
- Break larger jobs into smaller steps
- Take regular rest breaks
- Stay active if you can
- Give yourself extra time to complete tasks
- Ask for help when you need it

Small changes can make a big difference.

When should I seek support?

Talk to your healthcare team if brain fog is:

- Affecting your daily life
- Making work or study difficult
- Causing stress or worry
- Not improving over time.

You may benefit from support from:

- MPA services (no referral required)
- An occupational therapist
- A psychologist
- A neuropsychologist
- A cognitive rehabilitation service
- A cancer survivorship program.

Brain Fog and Work

Many people find that CRCI affects their confidence at work. Helpful workplace supports may include:

- Flexible work hours
- A gradual return to work
- Written instructions and reminders
- Extra time for complex tasks
- Reduced multitasking
- Open communication with your manager
- You do not have to manage these challenges alone.

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Other Helpful Resources

Cancer Council Australia
Information and practical tips for managing changes in thinking and memory.

Cancer Council NSW
Information, support, and the Brain Fog and Cancer podcast.

National Cancer Institute
Patient-friendly information about cognitive changes after cancer.

Live Work Cancer
Free support for people affected by cancer, including coaching sessions, peer support groups, webinars, and practical resources to help manage work during and after treatment.