

# Mind Body Program for Individuals at High Risk for Cancer

The Massachusetts General Cancer Center is pleased to offer the Benson-Henry Institute for Mind Body Medicine's highly regarded **Stress Management and Resiliency Training (SMART-3RP)** training. This program will be for individuals identified to be at high risk for cancer including having a hereditary cancer syndrome and will be in an online format on Zoom.

This program is designed to assist individuals without a cancer diagnosis but who have other risk factors putting them at a higher risk for cancer. The program will provide critical tools to help individuals cope with the experience of being identified to be at high genetic risk for cancer.

## During eight, 90-minute weekly sessions, this program will help participants:

- Learn self-care techniques, through relaxation, mindful awareness and adaptive thought patterns
- Reduce stress and physical/emotional symptoms associated with being at high risk for cancer
- Cope with and manage the increased cancer risk and the ongoing surveillance for cancer
- Promote a sense of control, optimism, acceptance and well-being



## Elements of the program include:

- Interactive lessons
- Healthy behaviors
- Group learning
- Skills training
- Symptom monitoring
- Self-Care

## Enrollment

The **Mind Body Program for Individuals at High Risk for Cancer** is billable to insurance; most insurers cover the program. Pre-registration and a \$50 materials fee are required.

## Tuesdays beginning January 30, 2024 @ 6:30-8:00 pm

Virtual interactive groups led by Dr. April Hirschberg will be offered through the Mass General Cancer Center Waltham

To register, email [ahirschberg@partners.org](mailto:ahirschberg@partners.org)

Visit [bensonhenryinstitute.org](http://bensonhenryinstitute.org) or [massgeneral.org/cancer](http://massgeneral.org/cancer) to learn more.

# Frequently Asked Questions

**What is the goal of the group program?** This program is designed to assist individuals who have been identified to be at high risk of cancer. The program will provide critical tools to help individuals cope with the experience of knowing this information as well as adjust to life with this information regarding their risk.

**Who is the program for?** The program is geared towards adults who have been identified by a genetic counselor to have a hereditary cancer syndrome and for individuals who have been identified to be at high risk for cancer and are being followed at the Cancer Center. However, there are some exceptions. For more information about whether this program is the right fit for you, please email [ahirschberg@partners.org](mailto:ahirschberg@partners.org).

**What will group sessions be like?** During each group session, a variety of mind-body strategies will be introduced to help you adapt to and navigate the knowledge of being at high risk for cancer as well as other ongoing life challenges. Practical strategies for managing life stress and developing healthy physical activity, nutrition and sleep habits will be introduced. You will be encouraged to practice these strategies regularly throughout each week.

**Will the groups talk specifically about cancer?** Conversations during sessions might naturally focus on the challenges of being identified to be at higher risk for cancer and how cancer may have impacted your family. However, we also talk about other chronic stressors and goals. Importantly, this program encourages you to set goals and build skills that will be most relevant to you.

**Which Mass General locations offer the this program?** Groups will be held online via Zoom.

**Can I join at any time?** This is an 8-week program and we invite participants to join for the full 8 weeks. New groups start approximately every 2-3 months. Please contact [ahirschberg@partners.org](mailto:ahirschberg@partners.org) for information about the next group start date.

**What if I can't make it to all the sessions?** We understand that things often come up that may make it difficult for you to attend, and that's okay! If you need to miss a session let the group facilitator know prior to the session either via email or phone. Several sessions do build on skills learned from earlier sessions, so we encourage you to review any missed materials before the next session.

**Do I have to be a Mass General patient to join the program?** We offer the program to adults who receive their care at a Mass General location or at a Mass General Cancer Center location.

**Will I be billed for the group sessions?** Most health insurances provide coverage for this program. However, some patients will have a co-pay. We will work with our billing office to confirm whether your insurance provides coverage for this group treatment. We strongly encourage you to contact your health insurance carrier to find out whether you will have any co-pays or deductibles to consider for group therapy code 90853.

**Are there any additional program fees?** There is a \$50 fee for the program manual. We ask that you pay the materials fee in advance of the first group session. If you decide to join the group we will provide you with detailed information about how to submit this fee on-line, by phone, or via mail.

**When will I receive the program materials?** You will receive the materials prior to the first group session.

**Can my friend/family join?** Unfortunately, because this group is geared toward individuals who are at high risk of cancer, but do not have cancer, we are unable to accommodate individuals with a history of having cancer. There is a Mass General Mind Body Program for Cancer Survivors [mghsurvivorship@partners.org](mailto:mghsurvivorship@partners.org) and you may refer your friends or family members to that program if appropriate, or there is the original program at the Benson-Henry Institute for Mind Body Medicine. If you a family/friend is interested, ask your group facilitator for more information.