



[cancer.org](https://www.cancer.org) | 1.800.227.2345

## Questions to Ask Your Health Care Team About COVID-19

The current COVID-19 outbreak, caused by a new type of coronavirus, is very scary and concerning for many people. The American Cancer Society understands how stressful this time can be for people with cancer, cancer survivors, and their families and caregivers.

### Where to find answers

You can find updated information and answers from the American Cancer Society about the [coronavirus, COVID-19, and cancer](#)<sup>1</sup>, including:

- Where to find resources to help answer [common questions people have about coronavirus and COVID-19](#)<sup>2</sup>
- Why [infections in people with cancer](#)<sup>3</sup> can be a concern
- If [people with cancer should get the COVID-19 vaccine](#)<sup>4</sup>
- Ways to [manage stress and emotions](#)<sup>5</sup> during this time
- Tips for [staying healthy while stuck at home](#)<sup>6</sup>
- How [telehealth \(telemedicine\)](#)<sup>7</sup> might be a way to get medical attention
- Hints to help [caregivers who have coronavirus concerns](#)<sup>8</sup>

**You probably have questions that you haven't found answers to about how COVID-19 might affect you. This is because each person's cancer, treatment, and situation can be different, so the answers are not the same for everyone. There are many questions you might need to ask your health care team to get the answers you are looking for.**

## What to ask your health care team

Here are some questions people with cancer or cancer survivors might want to ask their health care team about coronavirus.

### For all people with cancer or a history of cancer, and people facing a possible cancer diagnosis:

- In my situation, how can I prevent getting COVID-19?
- Am I at higher risk of getting COVID-19? Why or why not?
- Should I get the COVID-19 vaccine now or should I wait? Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe for cancer patients?
- Is there a specific type of doctor I should be asking to see now?
- What symptoms of COVID-19 should I watch for?
- What should I do if I have symptoms of COVID-19?
- If I get tested and I'm positive for COVID-19, what will happen?
- If I get sick from COVID-19, will it affect the outlook (prognosis) of my cancer?
- If I get tested and I'm negative for COVID-19, what should I do if I still don't feel well?
- If I get tested and I'm negative for COVID-19, can I still get infected later?
- Will this outbreak (or my test result) delay or affect my care in any way?
- Is telehealth available so I can get care virtually or be seen by a doctor over the internet?

### For people getting ready to have exams, tests, or surgery for cancer:

- Will having this procedure put me at a higher risk of getting COVID-19? Why or why not?
- Do I need to have the procedure now, or is it safe to wait?
- Do you think I should delay this procedure? If so, for how long?
- Is there a chance the hospital or facility will cancel my procedure or surgery? What are my options if it's canceled? Can I have the procedure or surgery somewhere else?
- Do I need a COVID-19 test before I can get my procedure?
- Should I get a COVID-19 vaccine before my procedure is done?
- Can I bring a family member or friend with me? Can people visit me? Can I visit other people?

- Is telehealth available so I can get care virtually or be seen by a doctor over the internet?
- Will this outbreak delay any results from the procedure?

**For people getting ready to start cancer treatment:**

- Will treatment put me at a higher risk of getting COVID-19? Why or why not?
- Is there a chance I can be exposed to the virus when I come in for treatment?
- Should I get the COVID-19 vaccine before I start treatment? If so, when should I get it?
- Do I need to start treatment now or is it safe to wait? How long is OK to wait?
- Is there a chance the treatment center will cancel my scheduled treatment? What are my options if it's canceled? Is there another center where I can get treatment?
- Can I bring a family member or friend with me to treatment?
- Can I go to work? Should my caregiver go to work?
- Can I visit friends? Can friends and relatives visit me?
- Are there special precautions I should take after treatment begins?
- Is telehealth available so I can get care virtually or be seen by a doctor over the internet?
- Can I get care, treatment, or bloodwork at home?

**For people currently getting cancer treatment:**

- Does my treatment put me at higher risk of getting COVID-19? Why or why not?
- Is there a chance I will be exposed to the virus when I come in for treatment?
- Can I get the COVID-19 vaccine while I am getting treatment? Will the vaccine work if I get it during my treatment?
- If I get sick or go to the hospital from COVID-19, how will my cancer treatment be affected?
- Do I need to wear a mask or gloves at home when I'm around my family and other people?
- How much do I need to stay at home? Can I run errands like going to the store?
- Can I go to work? Should my caregiver go to work?
- Can I visit friends? Can friends and relatives visit me?
- Should I get my treatment now? Will it put me more at risk?
- Do I need a COVID-19 test before I can get treatment?

- Are there medicines I can take during treatment to lessen my risk of getting the virus?
- Do you think I should delay my treatment? If so, for how long?
- What precautions do I need to take when I come in for treatment or check-ups?
- Can I bring a family member or friend with me to treatment or check-ups?
- Should I continue treatment or keep my appointments if I have symptoms of COVID-19?
- Will I need to be seen more frequently now?
- Will I need to have more frequent labs or exams now?
- Is there a chance the treatment center will cancel my scheduled treatment? What are my options if it's canceled? Is there another center where I can get treatment?
- Can I get care, treatment, or bloodwork at home?
- Is telehealth available so I can get care virtually or be seen by a doctor over the internet?
- If I miss a treatment, what will happen? Are there other treatment options?

**For people who are not currently getting treatment or who have finished treatment:**

- Am I still at higher risk of getting COVID-19? Why or why not?
- If I get sick from COVID-19, will it affect the outlook (prognosis) of my cancer?
- Are there special precautions I should be taking? If so, for how long?
- Should I get the COVID-19 vaccine now or should I wait? Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe for people who have finished cancer treatment?
- How much do I need to stay at home? Can I run errands like going to the store?
- Can I go to work? Should my caregiver go to work?
- Can I wait to go in for follow-up tests or appointments until a later time?
- Is there a chance I can be exposed to the virus if I come for follow-up tests or appointments?
- Do you think I should I delay my upcoming check-up, follow-up test, or cancer screening?
- Is there a chance my upcoming check-up, follow-up test, or cancer screening will be canceled? What will happen if it's canceled? Can I get it somewhere else?
- Can I reschedule a check-up, follow-up test, or cancer screening? If so, when should I reschedule it?
- Is telehealth available so I can get care virtually or be seen by a doctor over the internet?

- Will this outbreak delay any test results?

## Hyperlinks

1. [www.cancer.org/about-us/what-we-do/coronavirus-covid-19-and-cancer.html](http://www.cancer.org/about-us/what-we-do/coronavirus-covid-19-and-cancer.html)
2. [www.cancer.org/latest-news/common-questions-about-the-new-coronavirus-outbreak.html](http://www.cancer.org/latest-news/common-questions-about-the-new-coronavirus-outbreak.html)
3. [www.cancer.org/treatment/treatments-and-side-effects/physical-side-effects/low-blood-counts/infections.html](http://www.cancer.org/treatment/treatments-and-side-effects/physical-side-effects/low-blood-counts/infections.html)
4. [www.cancer.org/treatment/treatments-and-side-effects/physical-side-effects/low-blood-counts/infections/covid-19-vaccines-in-people-with-cancer.html](http://www.cancer.org/treatment/treatments-and-side-effects/physical-side-effects/low-blood-counts/infections/covid-19-vaccines-in-people-with-cancer.html)
5. [www.cancer.org/latest-news/nurture-your-emotional-health.html](http://www.cancer.org/latest-news/nurture-your-emotional-health.html)
6. [www.cancer.org/latest-news/tips-for-staying-healthy-while-stuck-at-home.html](http://www.cancer.org/latest-news/tips-for-staying-healthy-while-stuck-at-home.html)
7. [www.cancer.org/latest-news/medicare-expands-telehealth-to-help-seniors-stay-home.html](http://www.cancer.org/latest-news/medicare-expands-telehealth-to-help-seniors-stay-home.html)
8. [www.cancer.org/latest-news/cancer-caregiving-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak.html](http://www.cancer.org/latest-news/cancer-caregiving-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak.html)

Last Revised: December 21, 2020

## Written by

The American Cancer Society medical and editorial content team  
([www.cancer.org/cancer/acs-medical-content-and-news-staff.html](http://www.cancer.org/cancer/acs-medical-content-and-news-staff.html))

Our team is made up of doctors and oncology certified nurses with deep knowledge of cancer care as well as journalists, editors, and translators with extensive experience in medical writing.

American Cancer Society medical information is copyrighted material. For reprint requests, please see our Content Usage Policy ([www.cancer.org/about-us/policies/content-usage.html](http://www.cancer.org/about-us/policies/content-usage.html)).

**cancer.org | 1.800.227.2345**