



Questions to Ask About Your Cancer

If you have been told you have cancer, you may have a lot of questions. Your doctor or cancer care team is the best place to start asking these questions.

Here are some questions you could ask that might help you better understand your cancer, treatment, and side effects. You will likely have other questions as well.

When you're told you have cancer

- ☐ What kind of cancer do you think I have?
- ☐ Why do you think I have cancer?
- ☐ Where do you think the cancer started in my body?
Has it spread to other parts of the body?
- ☐ Do you know the stage of the cancer? What does that stage mean for me?
- ☐ Do I need to have other tests?
- ☐ Who will do these tests? When and where will they be done? Who can explain them to me?
- ☐ How and when will I get the results? Who will explain them to me?
- ☐ What are my chances of surviving the cancer?
- ☐ Can biomarker or molecular testing be done for my type of cancer?
- ☐ Should I think about genetic counseling and testing for myself or my family?
- ☐ What are the risks of this treatment?
- ☐ How soon do I need to start treatment?
- ☐ What will happen if I decide not to get treatment right now?
- ☐ How much experience do you have treating this type of cancer?
- ☐ Should I get a second opinion? How would I do that?
- ☐ Will I need surgery?
- ☐ If I need surgery, will I need other treatment(s) before or after surgery?
- ☐ Is there a clinical trial that might be right for me?
- ☐ Will I be able to have children after treatment? Are there things that can be done to protect my ability to have children in the future?

Deciding on a treatment plan

- ☐ What are my treatment choices? Where can I learn more about these options?
- ☐ What treatment do you suggest? Why?
- ☐ What's the goal of this treatment? Do you think it could cure the cancer?
- ☐ What financial support can I get to help pay what insurance doesn't cover or with other daily needs?
- ☐ What can I do if I don't have health insurance?
- ☐ What can I do if I can't afford the treatments I need?
- ☐ Is there a financial counselor or patient navigator I can talk with?

Getting ready for treatment

- ☐ What will my treatment be like? How long will my treatment last?
- ☐ Where will I go for treatment? Who will do my treatments?
- ☐ Will I be able to go to work or school, spend time with my family, and be able to do my daily activities during treatment?
- ☐ What can I do to get ready for treatment?
- ☐ Can I drive myself to treatment, or should I get a ride? What if I can't find a ride to treatment?
- ☐ Is there anything I can do to help the treatment work better?
- ☐ What side effects might I have from these treatments?
- ☐ Will I need to take any special precautions while I'm getting treated?
- ☐ Can you suggest a mental health professional I can see if I start to feel anxious, depressed, or distressed?
- ☐ Will I need help at home? If so, who can help me figure out how to get the help I'll need?

During treatment

- ☐ What's the best time to call if I have a question or problem? How quickly can I expect to be called back?
- ☐ What should I do if I have a serious problem when your office is closed?
- ☐ Will I need special tests, such as imaging scans or blood tests, and if so, how often?
- ☐ Do I need to change what I eat during treatment?
- ☐ Will I be able to exercise during treatment? What kind of exercise can I do, and how often?
- ☐ What about vitamins or diets that friends tell me about? How will I know if they are safe?

- ☐ How will we know if the treatment is working?
- ☐ What would we do if the treatment doesn't work?

If you are having symptoms or side effects from your cancer or treatment

- ☐ How long are my side effects likely to last?
- ☐ Who can help me control my symptoms and side effects?
- ☐ What can I do to help control my symptoms and side effects?
- ☐ What symptoms or side effects should I let my cancer care team know about? Which ones should I let you know about right away? When might I need to go to the emergency room or call 911?
- ☐ When should I call my cancer care team? When should I call my primary care provider?
- ☐ Would it help for me to see a palliative care team or doctor to help me manage my symptoms and cope with my cancer?

If you choose not to get treated

- ☐ What type of follow-up will I need? Will I continue to see my cancer care team or only my primary care provider?
- ☐ Who can help me manage my symptoms and cope with my cancer? Would it help for me to see a palliative care team or doctor?
- ☐ Who should I call about any symptoms or side effects that I have? When should I call my cancer care team? When should I call my primary care provider?
- ☐ How much longer do you think I will live? Would hospice be a good option for me?
- ☐ What screening tests should I get for other types of cancer? When should I get them?



For more information and answers, visit the American Cancer Society website at cancer.org or call us at **1-800-227-2345**. We're here when you need us.

