



Here are some examples of the types of questions you may want to ask your doctor.

General information

- What type of cancer do I have?
- Where exactly is it located?
- What are the risk factors for this disease?
- Is this type of cancer caused by genetic factors? Are other members of my family at risk?
- How many people are diagnosed with this type of cancer each year?
- What lifestyle changes (diet, exercise, rest) do you recommend I make to stay as healthy as possible before, during, and after treatment?
- Where can I find more information about my cancer?

Symptoms

- What are some common symptoms or side effects of this type of cancer?
- How can I avoid these and/or manage them with my daily activities?
- Is there anything that can be done to make my symptoms or side effects better?
- Are there activities that may make them worse?
- If new symptoms or side effects arise or existing ones worsen, what should I do?

Diagnosis

- What diagnostic tests or procedures are necessary? How often?
- What information will these tests tell us?
- How can I prepare myself for each test or procedure?
- Where do I need to go to have this test?
- When will I get the results? How will I get the results (over the phone, at the next appointment, etc.)?
- Can you explain my pathology report (laboratory test results) to me?
- If I seek a second opinion, will I have to repeat any tests or procedures?
- How much information about my diagnosis should I share, and at what time, with my friends and loved ones?

Staging

- What is the stage of my cancer? What does this mean?
- Has cancer spread to my lymph nodes or anywhere else?
- How is staging used to find out cancer treatment?
- What is my prognosis (chance of recovery)?

Treatment

- What are my treatment options?
- Which treatments, or combination of treatments, do you recommend? Why?
- What is the goal of the treatment you are recommending?
- What clinical trials (research studies involving people) are open to me?
- Who will be part of my treatment team, and what does each member do?
- How much experience do you (or the treatment team) have treating this type of cancer?
- Will I need to be hospitalized for treatment, or is this treatment done in an outpatient clinic?
- What is the expected timeline for my treatment plan? Do I need to be treated right away?
- How will this treatment affect my daily life? Will I be able to work, exercise, and perform my usual activities?
- What are the short-term side effects of this treatment?
- What long-term side effects may be associated with this cancer treatment?
- Will this treatment affect my fertility (ability to become pregnant or father children)?
- Besides treating cancer, what can be done to treat my symptoms?
- How can I keep myself as healthy as possible during treatment?

Clinical trials

- What are clinical trials?
- How do clinical trials help people with cancer?
- Is this a treatment option for me?
- What happens during a clinical trial?
- What are the benefits and risks of participating in a clinical trial?
- How will I be monitored while participating in a clinical trial?
- What are my responsibilities during the clinical trial?
- Are there any costs associated with my participation in a clinical trial?
- Where can I learn more about clinical trials?

Support

- What support services are available to me? To my family?
- Whom should I call with questions or concerns during non-business hours?
- May I contact you or the nurse to talk about additional information I find?
- Can you recommend a social worker to help locate support services?
- If I'm worried about managing the costs related to my cancer care, who can help me with these concerns?
- Who handles health insurance concerns in your office?

Follow-up care

- What follow-up tests do I need, and how often will I need them?
- Is there anything else I should be asking?