

# QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR HEALTH CARE TEAM

**When your health care team talks about your diagnosis and treatment, ask questions about anything you don't understand. As you start getting more information about your diagnosis, you will learn that there are many effective treatment options and many places you can turn to for help and hope.**

## Questions to Ask Your Health Care Team About Your Diagnosis

- What is my specific diagnosis?
- Have you treated other patients with my type of cancer?
- Where is the cancer located?
- What type of testing is needed for my specific diagnosis?
- What are my treatment options?
- What is the recommended treatment?
- How long does this kind of treatment usually last?
- What are the possible side effects of treatment?
- Should I get a second opinion? What stage is my cancer and what are the different types of stages?
- If something unexpected comes up, who should I call?
- Who can I talk to about insurance questions? What's the best time to call you if I have a question?
- What are the specific roles of my health care team?



## Questions to Ask Health Care Team About Your Treatment

- What are the goals for this treatment? What if my symptoms feel worse during treatment?
- How will it be given? Will I need to go to the doctor's office or hospital to get my treatment, or will I get medication I can take at home?
- How often will I receive treatment, and for how long?
- What are the possible benefits and risks of this treatment?
- How often will I have scans or blood work during treatment?
- How much will my treatment cost? Who can I talk to about financial assistance?
- If I have questions during my treatment and my doctor is not available, who can I ask? For example, is there a nurse, social worker, or other specialist available? When should I contact my primary care physician? Should I consider participating in a clinical trial?

## Questions to Ask Your Health Care Team About Personal Changes

- Will I be able to continue working while undergoing treatment?
- Will my appearance change – for example, will I lose my hair?
- What will my energy levels be like during treatment?
- Should I avoid certain foods or have a certain diet while undergoing treatment?
- Will this treatment affect my fertility?



### BE PREPARED BEFORE APPOINTMENTS:

- Start a health care journal.
- Prepare a list of questions ahead of time.
- Bring someone with you to your appointments.
- Have someone to call during the appointment if you are alone.
- Write down your doctor's answers.
- If your doctor allows it, record your visit.

### CancerCare® Can Help

Founded in 1944, CancerCare is the leading national organization providing free support services and information to help people manage the emotional, practical and financial challenges of cancer. Our comprehensive services include case management, counseling and support groups over the phone, online and in-person, educational workshops, publications and financial and co-payment assistance. All CancerCare services are provided by master's-prepared oncology social workers and world-leading cancer experts.

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