

Cancer Support Team's **QUESTIONS TO ASK THE DOCTOR**

General Suggestions:

- Bring someone (family member or friend) with you.
- Bring pen and paper and take notes.
- If you do not understand something ask the doctor or nurse to explain again.
- If you feel comfortable doing so, bring a tape recorder and tape the information given at the appointment.

General Cancer Related Questions:

1. What type of cancer do I have?
2. At what stage is the cancer?
3. Is it a fast growing cancer?
4. Has the cancer spread since the tests were done?
5. What is the treatment for this type of cancer (Surgery/Chemotherapy/Radiation)?
6. What is the goal of the treatment?
7. How will I be able to tell if the treatment is working?
8. Will I need supportive services through an agency like Cancer Support Team and, if so, how are these services ordered or arranged, and who makes these arrangements?

Surgery Related Questions:

1. How do you determine if you will be able to operate?
2. Who will perform the surgery?
3. Do you have any educational hand-outs that will explain the surgery?
4. How long will the surgery take?
5. How long will I be in the hospital?
6. Will I have a Visiting Nurse Service when I go home?
7. If I need Visiting Nurses, who makes these arrangements?
8. How long will it take for me to recover from the surgery?
9. When will I be able to resume all normal activities?
10. Will you give me prescription(s) for pain management if needed?

Chemotherapy Related Questions:

1. How do you determine what drugs to use for treatment of my cancer?
2. What are the names of the drugs that you recommend?
3. Do you have any written information about these drugs?
4. Will I need a surgically placed "port"?
5. How often will I receive treatment?
6. Will I need to be monitored between treatments (i.e., blood work/hydration)?
7. How will the treatments be given (IV/IM/PO, etc.)?
8. Where will the treatments be given (hospital/office/infusion center)?
9. How long will each treatment take (i.e., how many hours)?
10. What are the side effects of the treatment?
11. When do these side effects usually begin (immediately/within a day/within a few days/within a week)?

12. What side effects are short-term and will eventually disappear?
13. What side effects may be permanent (i.e., neuropathies)?
14. Are there any medications given or ways suggested to overcome the side effects?
15. Can these treatments lead to other long-term medical problems (i.e., cardiac)?
16. How many treatments will I need?

Radiation Related Questions:

1. Will radiation be part of the treatment?
2. What type of radiation will I receive?
3. When will radiation begin?
4. How often will I need to come for this treatment?
5. How long will each treatment take?
6. Will I receive an internal radiation?
7. If so, will I need to take any special precautions?
8. What are the side effects of radiation?
9. When do these side effects usually begin?
10. Are there any medications given or ways suggested to overcome the side effects?
11. Will these treatments destroy healthy tissue?
12. Can these treatments lead to other medical problems (i.e., heart disease)?
13. Will the treatment have an effect on any other organ system?
14. If so, which organ may be affected and how?
15. Will I experience pain during treatment or as a result of treatment?
16. What type of pain should I expect during treatment?
17. Will I experience skin burns or reactions at the radiation site?
18. What treatment is available to overcome these possible reactions?