

Questions to ask your doctor

During visits to your doctor, oncologist, or other healthcare provider, you will often be given a lot of information all at once. Here are some helpful tips for getting the information you need:

- Have a family member or friend go with you to your appointment so they can provide support and take notes for you.
- Record the consultation with your doctor (let them know first - most will have no objection) so you can listen to it at home later.
 - When you have a consultation over the phone or online it may be a good idea to put the phone on speaker and have a friend or relative take notes.
- If you hear words you don't understand, ask your doctor to use simple words or provide clarification to help you better understand your treatment and options.
- Prepare a list of questions to take with you so the doctor can provide information about specific things you need to know more about.

Questions often pop into our heads so keep a notebook handy during the appointment and at home for jotting down questions to ask during your next appointment.

Discussing treatment options and deciding on your treatment can raise a lot of questions and concerns. It's important that your voice is heard, and you feel listened to. Don't feel concerned about taking up too much of their time.

Be prepared and know what questions you would like to ask your healthcare team.

Here are some questions you might like to ask your doctor:

- ✓ What are my treatment options?
- ✓ Can you tell me how long do I have to live?
- ✓ How long before I know if the treatments are working?

- ✓ How many treatments will I need, how long will they take, and should I have someone bring me and take me home?
- ✓ What will happen if I choose not to have treatment?
- ✓ What are the side effects, both short and long term?
- ✓ What can I do to help manage the effects of any side effects?
- ✓ What is the benefit I will receive from the treatments suggested?
- ✓ Are there any side effects that I need to act on and seek medical advice if I experience them?
- ✓ Will the treatment affect my ability to keep working full or part-time?
- ✓ Will I need to arrange some extra help at home (such as household chores and caring for the family and pets)?
- ✓ How will these treatments affect my sex life?
- ✓ Why is there not a clear/standard progression through treatments now that I have advanced disease?
- ✓ What happens when I have a chemo break (because my bloods aren't good)?
- ✓ What about alternative/complimentary options?
- ✓ Is it true you can go back to chemotherapies that stopped working earlier?
- ✓ What are my options in terms of non-funded medications?
- ✓ How do I access non-funded medications?
- ✓ Should I consider planning a special diet for myself?
- ✓ Am I eligible for participation in a clinical trial?
- ✓ Are you able to give me contact details for someone that I can call after the appointment if I have any further questions or am unsure about anything thing that we have discussed today?