

Questions About Side Effects:

- What possible side effects should I prepare for?
- When might they start?
- Will they get better or worse with more treatments?
- How can I prepare for them or lessen their impact?
- Are there treatments that can help relieve the side effects? What are they? Do you usually recommend or prescribe them?
- Which risks are most serious?
- Will I require blood transfusions? Why?
- How can I best monitor myself for complications related to either my disease or my treatment?

Questions About Protecting Against Infection:

- Will my type of chemotherapy put me at risk for a low white blood cell count and infection?
- Can I help protect myself against infection right from the start of chemotherapy, instead of waiting until problems develop?
- Am I at special risk for infection?
- What are the signs of infection?
- How serious is an infection?
- How long will I be at risk for infection?
- What should I do if I have a fever?
- How are infections treated?

Questions About Daily Activities with Treatment:

- How will my treatment affect my usual activities?
- Will I be able to go to work/school?
- Will I need to stay in the hospital?
- Will I need someone to help me at home?
- Will I need help taking care of my kids?
- Are there any activities I should avoid during my chemotherapy?

Questions About What to Expect After Treatment:

- What happens after I complete my treatment?
- How can I best monitor myself for complications related to either my disease or my treatment?
- What kind of lab tests will I need?
- How frequently should I get those lab tests?
- What types of X-rays and scans will I need?
- How often do I need to come in for checkups?
- When will you know if I am cured?
- What happens if my disease comes back?

Questions About Financial Issues

- Will the treatment require out-of-pocket expenses?
- Is there someone in your office (or facility) who assists patients with questions about insurance? Who would that be?
- If my insurance does not pay for a particular treatment or medication, will you recommend an alternative treatment? What if it is less effective?
- Who can I talk to about getting treatment if I do not have insurance?
- Who can I talk to about pharmacy assistance programs if my insurance doesn't cover a particular medication?

Questions About Finding Support

- Where can I get literature about my illness?
- Are you willing to speak to my family about my illness and treatments?
- Where can I find out about support groups?
- Can I speak to someone who has undergone this treatment?
- Is there a social worker that I could talk with?
- Is there a dietitian on staff if I have nutritional concerns or difficulties?
- Do I need to be on a special diet?
- Would you recommend any lifestyle changes?
- Who do I call if I have a medical emergency during my treatment, or shortly afterwards?
- What are the telephone numbers I should have in order to reach you? The nurse? The hospital?

Questions To Ask Your Radiation Oncologist:

- What treatment(s) do you recommend? Why?
- What treatments are available and appropriate for me?
- How will my treatment be given?
- What are the cure and remission rates?
- What results do you expect from this treatment?
- Are there any alternatives to this treatment?
- What are the side effects of this treatment? How can they be minimized?
- How long is the course of treatment?
- How often do I receive the treatment and how much time will each treatment take?
- Where do I receive the treatment?
- Will I be able to continue with work/school?
- How will we know if the treatment is working?
- Could the treatment cause other problem (heart, lung or kidney damage/disease, fertility issues)?

Questions To Ask Your Surgical Oncologist:

- Why do I need this surgery?
- What is the operation (procedure) that is recommended?
- Are there any alternatives to this treatment?
- Are there other options than doing this procedure?
- What are the risks and benefits of this surgery?
- Why is this procedure necessary at this time?
- Will you explain this procedure in simple terms?
 - Will I be an inpatient or out patient?
 - What kind of anesthesia is required?
 - Will I have drains, catheters or intravenous lines?
 - Will I need a blood transfusion? If so, can I bank my blood before surgery?
- Are there any treatments I can have before surgery to shrink the tumor?
- What is the anticipated outcome?
- What is the recovery process?
- Will I need assistance when I get home?
- How long until I can assume normal activities?
- What are the procedure's cure/remission rates?
- What is your experience with this procedure?
- Is this procedure covered by my insurance plan?