
Checklist: Just Diagnosed.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

When you're first diagnosed with cancer, it's hard to know where to start. These questions will help you get started and feel prepared as you move forward. Your caregiver or cancer navigator can help you manage these things as well.

YOUR INSURANCE

- What are the copays, deductibles, and other costs with my current plan?
- Is it possible to change my insurance plan to one that offers me more coverage? How would that change my copays, deductibles, and other costs?
- What tests, treatments, and other services are covered by my insurance plan?
- Does my insurance plan cover the doctors I want to see? Are they the best doctors for my care?
- How do I get a second opinion if I want one?
- Does my insurance plan cover clinical trials?
- Does my insurance plan cover emotional support, like therapy or support groups?
- Does my insurance plan cover additional wellness treatments, like acupuncture, massage, or nutrition counseling?
- Does my insurance plan cover fertility preservation and other fertility related costs?

YOUR MEDICAL PLAN

- What is the exact name of cancer that I have been diagnosed with? What is the stage or grade? What does that mean?
- Do I need any additional tests before we figure out a treatment plan?
- What experience do you have in treating my type of cancer? If it's not a lot, is there a different doctor with more experience in my type of cancer that you could recommend me to?
- How much time do I have before I need to start treatment?
- What are my treatment goals? Are there multiple treatment options available to me? What are the pros and cons of each?
- Are there any lifestyle changes you suggest to help my body fight cancer or tolerate treatment better?
- What symptoms should I expect to experience with my type of cancer?
- What are the side effects of all of the medications and treatments I will be given? Are there ways I can manage or prevent side effects?
- How often will I be receiving treatment?
- How will we know if the treatment is working?
- What are the chances that my cancer will come back with this treatment plan?
- How drastically will my cancer and treatment plan impact my current lifestyle?
- Are there options to help cover costs if my insurance doesn't cover enough?
- Are there any clinical trials that are a good fit for me?
- Are there other services provided by this hospital/institution that are available to people with cancer? Are there any external services I should look into?
- How can I contact you if I have questions or concerns?

- In the event you are unable to make medical decisions for yourself, have you legally designated someone as your healthcare proxy?

YOUR FERTILITY OPTIONS

- How will my cancer and treatment plan impact my fertility?
- Based on my treatment plan, what is my risk of infertility?
- If I want to have children in the future, do I need to look into fertility preservation options now?
- Do I have time to pursue fertility preservation?
- When is it safe for me or my partner to get pregnant given my cancer treatment?
- Can you refer me to a fertility specialist so I can learn more?

YOUR FINANCES

- How much is my cancer treatment projected to cost?
- How much of my treatment will insurance cover?
- How will my other finances change during my cancer treatment? Will I spend less money in certain areas or more in others? Will my income be changing at all? How can I adjust my budget around all of these things?

YOUR WORK

- Are there accommodations I can have at work while going through treatment (i.e. less time on feet, more breaks, flexible hours)?
- Can we make a plan for my work on days when I need to get treatment? What about for days when the side effects of treatment are too intense to work through?
- How can I use my vacation or sick time, or PTO, to take time off for treatment and dealing with side effects?
- What are the medical leave policies? What about Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) medical leave?
- What flexibility does my primary caregiver have with their job in order to take care of me?

YOUR PERSONAL LIFE

- Do I feel comfortable and confident with my medical team? If not, how can I find alternate care?
- Who do I want to join me at medical appointments?
- Who can I call for help while I'm going through cancer? Are there people in my life who can help with specific things, or are more equipped to help in certain ways? What type of assistance do I expect to need? Can I ask people now for help in the future?
- Who can serve as a point person to disseminate updates to the rest of my support system?
- Who else in my life needs help during this time (i.e. kids, parents, pets)? Who can I ask to help them?