

# Questions to ask your Doctor

We recommend that you take another person to your appointments so they can record notes for you. Patients usually are suffering from anxiety and forget most of what they hear.

## After diagnosis

*(note that there are over 80 types of lymphoma)*

What is the exact type of lymphoma I have? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What stage is it? \_\_\_\_\_

How important is my stage to my prognosis? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Can I have a copy of the pathology report? \_\_\_\_\_

What is my prognosis? (understand that doctors can only give you statistical information and statistics cannot be applied to individuals) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Have 2 or more pathologists reviewed my biopsy and confirmed my diagnosis? \_\_\_\_\_

Has my biopsy been preserved so it can be reviewed again at a later date if necessary? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Since there are so many types of lymphoma where does my type fit in? Is it common or rare, easily treated or hard to treat? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What treatment are you recommending? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Why that particular treatment? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What other treatments should I consider? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Questions to ask your Doctor

What clinical trials are available for my situation? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I might be willing to travel for a clinical trial if it is promising for my type of lymphoma. Are the trials you just mentioned local trials or all trials for my situation? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I would really like to take some time to research my treatment choices so how urgent is it for me to start treatment quickly? \_\_\_\_\_

Where can I go for another opinion about my treatment plan? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Before treatment

Common side effects of chemotherapy and/or radiation are:

- Nausea and vomiting
- Fatigue
- Hair loss (alopecia)
- Peripheral Neuropathy
- Lowered blood counts, and a suppressed immune system (anaemia, neutropenia, thrombocytopenia)
- Unexplained Fever
- Changes in appetite and taste
- Difficulty eating due to mouth sores
- Weight gain, or weight loss (steroids often cause weight gain)
- Osteoporosis from the steroids

Which of those side effects can I expect? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Are any of them permanent? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Do you have drug information literature to help me know when my side effects need medical attention? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Questions to ask your Doctor

What drugs can I use to manage the side effects? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How is this treatment administered, pill, intravenous, other? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How often do I go for treatment and is it outpatient or will I have to be admitted to the hospital? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Can I drive myself to treatments? \_\_\_\_\_

Will I be able to take care of myself or will I need help? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If I get a fever over 38° C or 100.5° F should I go straight to emergency or should I phone first? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If phone first what is the phone number and who should I ask for? Should I go to the cancer clinic emergency or my local hospital emergency? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I am presently taking the following medications


Are there any drug interactions between my current medications and my treatment medications that I should know about? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Questions to ask your Doctor

## During treatment

How fast can I expect to see results? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What follow up tests will I have and how often? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How and when will I be notified of the test results? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Can I have copies of my test results? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a dietician and/or other supportive care experts I can consult with to help manage my side effects? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Economics

How much will my treatment cost? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Will my insurance company cover it? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Is there someone in your office that assists patients with questions about insurance? With reimbursement? Who might that be? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If my insurance does not pay for a particular medication that might be beneficial to me, will you choose an alternate treatment? Even if it might be less effective? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Do you have access to pharmaceutical patient assistance programs I could access if I cannot afford a particular medication or my insurance will not pay for a particular medication? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How can I get treatment if I do not have insurance? \_\_\_\_\_

# Questions to ask your Doctor

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## Support

How do I tell my family, children, and friends about my cancer? \_\_\_\_\_

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Are you willing to speak with key family members about me and my treatment? \_\_\_\_\_

Are there local support groups I can join? For my family and friends? \_\_\_\_\_

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Is there access to a social worker? \_\_\_\_\_

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Do I need to be on a special diet? \_\_\_\_\_

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Can I have sex? \_\_\_\_\_

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Can I drink alcohol? \_\_\_\_\_

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Who do I call if I have an emergency? \_\_\_\_\_

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What are the phone numbers I should have in order to reach you? The nurse? The hospital?

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## Palliative Care Options

If treatment is not successful what are the options available for care? \_\_\_\_\_

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# Questions to ask your Doctor

What is Hospice? \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_

Is Hospice an option? What is involved in signing onto a Hospice program? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How will pain be "managed"? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Will medications prevent the patient from being able to talk or know what's happening? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Are there any special financial assistance programs I should know about? \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If Medicare or any other health insurance does not cover the patient, will hospice still provide care? \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_