

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 30 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

Support

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

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? _____

Is there access to a social worker? _____

Do I need to be on a special diet? _____

Can I have sex? _____

Can I drink alcohol? _____

Who do I call if I have an emergency? _____

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

Palliative Care Options

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

Questions to ask your Doctor

What is Hospice? _____

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? _____

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

