

# Stomach Cancer: Treatment Questions



Talking with healthcare providers about cancer can be overwhelming. It can be hard to take in all of the information. It helps to be prepared. Make a list of questions and bring them to your appointments. Write the answers down.

Make sure you ask how the treatment will change your daily life, including your diet, and how you will look and feel after treatment. Ask how successful the treatment is expected to be, and what the risks and possible side effects are.

You may also want to ask a friend or family member to go with you. They can take notes and write down the answers, and also ask questions you may not think of. You can also ask your healthcare provider if you can record the conversation.

Below are some questions to ask during your appointments.

## Deciding on a treatment

- What kind of stomach cancer do I have?
- Where is the cancer? What part of my stomach is it in?
- What is the grade and stage of my cancer?
- Has the cancer spread anywhere else in my body?
- What are the treatment choices? Do I need more than 1 type of treatment?
- What treatment do you think is best for me?
- How much experience do you have treating this type of cancer?
- If I need surgery, how much of my stomach will be removed?
- Are there medicines I need to treat my cancer? What are their names and how do they work?
- Will treatment affect my ability to have children in the future?
- Will I be able to eat the way I do now?
- Will I need a feeding tube during or after treatment? Will it be permanent?
- What are the goals of the treatment you're recommending? Are we trying to get rid of the cancer for good (curative treatment)? Or are we trying to slow the cancer down (control growth or spread of cancer) or prevent it from causing symptoms (palliative treatment)?
- What's the success rate of this treatment for my type and stage of stomach cancer?
- What's the life expectancy for someone with my stage of cancer receiving this treatment?
- Are there any clinical trials that I may be eligible to participate in?
- Will my health insurance pay for treatment?
- How much will treatment cost me?

## Getting ready for treatment

- What should I do to be ready for treatment?
- What is the length of the treatment period?
- How long will each treatment take?
- Where do I have to go for the treatment? Will I have to stay in the hospital?
- Who will give me the treatment?
- Does someone need to go with me during treatments?
- Can I drive myself or take public transportation to treatment?
- Do you have someone on staff who can help me with transportation, finances, and other resources?
- Can I take my other medicines during treatment?
- Will I be able to work during my treatment?

## **Coping during treatment**

- What side effects should I expect?
- How long will side effects last?
- Are there side effects that I need to call you about?
- How do I reach you after hours and on weekends and holidays?
- What can I do to ease the side effects?
- How and what can I eat during treatment?
- Can I meet with a nutritionist?
- Will I be able to be around my family and friends?
- Are there support groups nearby or online that I can join?

## **After treatment**

- How will I feel after the treatment?
- What type of follow-up will I need after treatment?
- How will we know if treatment worked?
- Who will be in charge of my care?
- How can I get a copy of the treatment summary and a follow-up care plan (survivorship care plan)?

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