

# Liver Cancer: Treatment Questions



Talking with your healthcare providers about liver 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 take it to your appointments. Write the answers down in a notebook. Make sure you ask how the treatment might change your daily life, including your diet, and how you will look and feel after treatment. Ask how well the treatment is expected to work, 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.

Below are some questions you may want to ask. Not all of these might apply to your situation. But asking the questions that do apply can help you get a better idea of what to expect.

## Deciding on a treatment

- What type of liver cancer do I have?
- Has it spread from where it started?
- Do I need any more tests before we decide on treatment?
- What is the stage (extent) of my cancer? How does this affect my treatment choices?
- How well is the rest of my liver working?
- What are my treatment choices?
- What treatment do you think is best for me? Why?
- What are the goals of the treatment you recommend?
- What is the success rate of this treatment for my type and stage of cancer?
- What is the average life expectancy for someone with my stage of cancer getting this treatment?
- How much experience do you have treating cancers like mine?
- Should I get a second opinion?
- Are there any clinical trials I should look into?
- Will my insurance pay for treatment? How much will I have to pay?

## Getting ready for treatment

- How soon do I need to start treatment?
- What can I do to get ready for treatment?
- How long will each treatment take?
- Where do I have to go for treatment?
- 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?

- Can I take my other medicines during treatment?
- How long will I be in treatment?

## Coping during treatment

- How will we know if treatment is working?
- How will I feel during and after the treatment?
- Will I be able to go to work and be around my family and friends during treatment?
- What side effects can I expect?
- How long are the side effects likely to last?
- Will treatment affect how active I can be?
- Will treatment affect my ability to have children?
- Will there be side effects I need to call you about?
- What number do I call? After office hours? On weekends and on holidays?
- What can I do to ease the side effects?
- Should I change my diet? What foods can't I eat?
- Are there support groups nearby or online that I can join?
- Do you have someone on staff who can help me with transportation, finances, and other resources?

## After treatment

- How will I feel after the treatment?
- What symptoms should I watch for?
- What type of follow-up will I need after treatment?
- How will we know if treatment worked?
- What are my choices if the treatment doesn't work or if the cancer comes back?
- 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 plan)?

## Making a decision

When you have answers from your healthcare provider, it's time to think about what you want. Think about what side effects you can and can't handle. Talk about your concerns with your healthcare provider before making a decision about treatment. You may also want to get input from family and friends.

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