

# Kidney Cancer: Treatment Questions



Talking with healthcare providers about cancer can be overwhelming. It can be hard to take in all 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, how your body works, and how you'll 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 come with you. They can take notes and write down the answers. They can also ask questions you may not think of.

Here are some questions you might want to ask:

## Deciding on a treatment

- What kind of kidney cancer do I have?
- What's the grade and stage of my cancer?
- Has the cancer spread anywhere else in my body?
- What are my treatment choices?
- What treatment do you think is best for me?
- How much experience do you have treating cancers like mine?
- Should I get a second opinion?
- What are the goals of the treatment you're recommending?
- What's the success rate of this treatment for my type and stage of kidney cancer?
- What is the life expectancy for someone with my stage of cancer receiving this treatment?
- Are there any clinical trials that I should look into?
- Will my insurance cover treatment? How much will I have to pay?
- Will I be able to go to work and be around my family and friends?
- Will treatment affect my sex life or my ability to have children?

## Getting 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?
- Who will give me the treatment?
- Does someone need to be with me during treatment?
- Will I be able to drive myself or take public transportation to treatment?

- Can I take my other medicines during treatment?
- What can I do to get ready for treatment?

## Coping during treatment

- What side effects should I watch for?
- How long will side effects last?
- Are there side effects that I need to call you about?
- How do I reach you after hours, on weekends, and during 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?
- Are there any limits on what I can do?
- How will we know if treatment is working?
- 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?
- Are there any limits on what I can do?
- What long-term side effects should I watch for?
- What type of follow-up will I need after treatment?
- How often will I need to have tests and scans?
- How will we know if treatment worked?
- Who will be managing my care?
- How do I get a record of my care (survivorship care plan)?
- How will we know if the cancer comes back? What should I watch for?

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