
Suggested Questions to ask your Doctor

BEFORE your TREATMENT

- What is the stage of the disease? Has the cancer spread? Do any lymph nodes show signs of cancer?
- What is the goal of treatment? What are my treatment choices? Which do you recommend for me? Why?
- Will I have more than one kind of treatment?
- What are the expected benefits of each type of treatment?
- What can I do to prepare for treatment?
- Will I need to stay in the hospital? If so, for how long?
- What are the risks and possible side effects of each treatment? For example, am I likely to have eating problems during or after treatment? How can side effects be managed?
- What will the treatment cost? Will my insurance cover it?
- Would a research study (clinical trial) be appropriate for me?
- Can you recommend other doctors who could give me a second opinion about my treatment options?
- How often should I have checkups?

BEFORE an ENDOSCOPY

- Where will the procedure take place?
- Will I have to go to the hospital?
- How long will it take? Will I be awake?
- Will it hurt?

BEFORE a BIOPSY

- Where will the procedure take place?
- Will I have to go to the hospital?
- How long will it take? Will I be awake?
- Will it hurt?
- Will I get an anesthetic?
- What are the risks?
- What are the chances of infection or bleeding afterward?
- How do I prepare for the procedure?
- How long will it take me to recover?
- How soon will I know the results?
- Will I get a copy of the pathology report?
- If I do have cancer, who will talk to me about the next steps? When?

BEFORE a CAT or PET Scan

- Where will the procedure take place?
- Will I have to go to the hospital?
- How long will it take? Will I be awake?
- Will it hurt?

BEFORE your SURGERY

- Do you suggest surgery for me? If so, which type?
- Will you remove lymph nodes and other tissue? Will you remove part or all of the stomach? Why?
- What are the risks of surgery?
- How will I feel after surgery?
- How will pain be controlled after surgery?
- How long will I be in the hospital?
- Am I likely to have eating problems? Will I need a special diet?
- Will I need a feeding tube? If so, for how long? How do I take care of it? Who can help me if I have a problem?
- Will I have any lasting side effects?

BEFORE CHEMO

- Which drugs will I get?
- When will treatment start? When will it end? How often will I have treatments?
- Where will I go for treatment? Will I have to stay in the hospital?
- What can I do to take care of myself during treatment?
- How will we know the treatment is working?
- Will I have side effects during treatment? What side effects should I tell you about? Can I prevent or treat any of these side effects?
- Can these drugs affect my fertility?
- Can these drugs cause side effects later on?

BEFORE RADIATION

- Which type of radiation therapy can I consider? Are both types an option for me?
- When will treatment start? When will it end? How often will I have treatments?
- Will I need to stay in the hospital?
- What can I do to take care of myself before, during, and after treatment?
- How will I feel during treatment? Will I be able to drive myself to and from treatment?
- How will we know the treatment is working?
- How will I feel after the radiation therapy?
- Are there lasting effects?