

Questions to ask your oncologist

Almost nothing from a first appointment stays in your head — which is why it helps to have the questions written down.

Date: _____ Doctor: _____ Phone between check-ups: _____

The list helps you open the conversation with your doctor. It does not stand in for a consultation and does not replace what your own doctor tells you.

Understanding what I have

- ☐ What exactly is this cancer called, and what stage is it?
- ☐ Can you explain in plain words what the biopsy result (pathology report) says?
- ☐ Do I need any more tests before treatment starts?
- ☐ Will my case be discussed by the tumour board? When will I hear what was decided?
- ☐ How soon does treatment need to start? Does anything change if it begins two weeks later?

What the doctor said

About the treatment you propose

- ☐ Which treatment do you recommend, and why this one in particular?
- ☐ What are we aiming for: a cure, keeping the disease under control, or easing symptoms?
- ☐ What happens during one session, and how many will there be?
- ☐ Which side effects are most common, and what do we do about each?
- ☐ What other options exist, and what happens if I decide against this treatment?
- ☐ Is this drug covered by the national oncology programme, or do I pay for it?

What the doctor said

How treatment changes daily life

- ☐ Can I keep working during treatment?
- ☐ What should I eat, and what should I avoid, on treatment days?
- ☐ Can I drive, exercise, travel away for a few days?
- ☐ What do I do about the other medicines and supplements I already take?
- ☐ Will this affect my fertility? If I want children, what do I need to do beforehand?

What the doctor said

Between check-ups: who to call, and when

- ☐ Which symptoms mean I should call straight away rather than wait for my appointment?
- ☐ What number do I call out of hours, in the evening or at the weekend?
- ☐ What temperature counts as a fever in my case? What do I do then?
- ☐ If I end up in A&E, what does the doctor there need to know about my treatment?
- ☐ How will we know the treatment is working, and how often do we check?

What the doctor said

Paperwork, money and travel

- ☐ What documents will I need from here on, and where do I get them?
- ☐ What is covered by state insurance, and what comes out of my pocket?
- ☐ Am I entitled to sick leave or a disability certificate? Who issues them?
- ☐ Can I have part of the treatment or the tests done closer to home?
- ☐ Is my travel here reimbursed?

What the doctor said

If I want to ask someone else

- ☐ How would you feel about me seeking a second opinion? What should I take with me?
- ☐ Are there clinical trials that might suit my case?
- ☐ Who coordinates the whole treatment — who do I come back to with questions?

What the doctor said
