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[Central Nervous System Tumors - Childhood - Questions to Ask the Doctor](#) [1]

This section has been reviewed and approved by the [Cancer.Net Editorial Board](#) [2], 04/2015

ON THIS PAGE: You will find some questions to ask your child's doctor or other members of the health care team, to help you better understand your child's diagnosis, treatment plan, and overall care. To see other pages, use the menu on the side of your screen.

[Talking often with the doctor is important](#) [3] to make informed decisions about your child's health care. These suggested questions are a starting point to help you learn more about your child's care and treatment. You are also encouraged to ask additional questions that are important to you. You may want to print this list and bring it to your child's next appointment, or [download Cancer.Net's free mobile app](#) [4] for an e-list and other interactive tools to manage your child's care.

Questions to ask after getting a diagnosis

- What type of tumor has been diagnosed?
- Where exactly is the tumor located?
- Can you explain my child's pathology report (laboratory test results) to me?

- Is the tumor cancerous?
- What is the tumor's grade? What does this mean?
- What is the tumor's molecular subtype (if applicable)? What does this mean?
- Are other tests needed to confirm this diagnosis?
- What is your familiarity with my child's tumor type and its treatment?

Questions to ask about choosing a treatment and managing side effects

- What are the treatment options?
- What clinical trials are open to my child? Where are they located, and how do I find out more about them?
- What treatment plan do you recommend? Why?
- What is the goal of each treatment? Is it to eliminate the tumor, help my child feel better, or both?
- What are the chances for success with the planned therapy?
- Who is part of the treatment team, and what does each team member do?
- Who will be coordinating my child's overall treatment?
- What are the possible side effects of each treatment option, both in the short term and long term?
- How will this treatment affect my child's daily life? Will he or she be able to attend school and perform his or her usual activities?

- Could this treatment affect my child's ability to become pregnant or have children in the future? If so, should I talk with a fertility specialist before treatment begins?
- If I'm worried about managing the costs related to my child's medical care, who can help me with these concerns?
- What is the chance that the tumor will recur?
- What support services are available to my child? To my family?
- Whom should I call for questions or problems?

Questions to ask about having surgery

- What type of surgery will my child have?
- How long will the operation take?
- How long will he or she be in the hospital?
- Can you describe what recovery from surgery will be like?
- What are the possible long-term effects of having this surgery?

Questions to ask about having radiation therapy or chemotherapy

- What type of treatment is recommended?
- What is the goal of this treatment?
- How long will it take to give this treatment?
- What side effects can I expect during treatment?

- What are the possible long-term effects of having this treatment?
- What can be done to relieve the side effects?

Questions to ask about planning follow-up care

- What is the risk of the tumor returning? Are there signs and symptoms I should watch for?
- What long-term side effects or late effects are possible based on the treatment my child received?
- What follow-up tests will my child need, and how often will he or she need them?
- How do I get a treatment summary and survivorship care plan to keep in my personal records?
- Who will be coordinating my child's follow-up care?
- What survivorship support services are available to me/my child? To my family?

The [next section in this guide is Additional Resources \[5\]](#), and it offers some more resources on this website beyond this guide that may be helpful to you. Or, use the menu on the side of your screen to choose another section to continue reading this guide.

Links

- [1] <http://www.cancer.net/cancer-types/central-nervous-system-tumors-childhood/questions-ask-doctor>
- [2] <http://www.cancer.net/about-us>
- [3] <http://www.cancer.net/node/24958>
- [4] <http://www.cancer.net/node/29951>
- [5] <http://www.cancer.net/node/18673>