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PDF generated on July 26, 2016 from
<http://www.cancer.net/cancer-types/lung-cancer-non-small-cell/questions-ask-doctor>

[Lung Cancer - Non-Small Cell - Questions to Ask the Doctor \[1\]](#)

This section has been reviewed and approved by the [Cancer.Net Editorial Board \[2\]](#), 06/2016

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

[Talking often with the doctor is important \[3\]](#) to make informed decisions about your health care. These suggested questions are a starting point to help you learn more about your cancer 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 next appointment, or [download Cancer.Net's free mobile app \[4\]](#) for an e-list and other interactive tools to manage your care.

Questions to ask after getting a diagnosis

- What type of NSCLC do I have?
- What is the stage of the NSCLC? What does this mean?
- Can you explain my pathology report (laboratory test results) to me?

Questions to ask about choosing a treatment and managing side effects

- What are my treatment options?
- What clinical trials are available for me? Where are they located, and how do I find out more about them?
- Should I see other doctors to assist in my care, such as a thoracic surgeon, radiation oncologist, medical oncologist, and/or pulmonologist? What is the role of each doctor?
- Who will be leading my overall treatment?
- Who else will be part of my health care team, and what does each member do?
- What treatment plan do you recommend? Why?
- Do I need additional scans or biopsies in order to plan my treatment?
- What is the goal of each treatment? Is it to eliminate the cancer, help me feel better, or both?
- What are the possible side effects of this treatment, both in the short term and the long term?
- In addition to treating my cancer, what can be done to treat my symptoms?
- How will this treatment affect my daily life? Will I be able to work, exercise, and perform my usual activities?
- Could this treatment affect my sex life? If so, how and for how long?
- Could this treatment affect my ability to become pregnant or have children? If so, should I talk with a fertility specialist before cancer treatment begins?

- If I'm worried about managing the costs of cancer care, who can help me?
- If I'm participating in a clinical trial, what are the costs I need to pay? What is covered by my health insurance?
- What support services are available to me? To my family?
- Whom should I call for questions or problems?

Questions to ask about having surgery

- What type of surgery will I have? Will lymph nodes be removed?
- How long will the operation take?
- How long will I be in the hospital?
- Can you describe what my recovery from surgery will be like?

Questions to ask about having chemotherapy, targeted therapy, or immunotherapy

- What are the names of the drugs, and how will they be given?
- What are the possible side effects of each medication? What side effects or problems should I watch for?
- What can be done to lessen these side effects?
- How often will I need to visit the doctor to receive the therapy, and how long will each visit take?
- Will I be able to go to and return from this treatment on my own, or should I arrange to have assistance?

- What are the recommendations for people who take their medication at home?
- What will these medications cost me? Are there less expensive options that work as well?

Questions to ask about radiation therapy

- How will my treatment be planned? What types of scans will be used?
- Where will I receive radiation therapy?
- How often will I receive radiation therapy?
- How much time will each treatment take?
- How much of the healthy lung will be included in the radiation field?
- Is it possible for me to receive chemotherapy with my radiation therapy? If so, what are the added side effects of giving the chemotherapy at the same time, compared with 1 after another?
- Will I be able to go to and return from this treatment on my own, or should I arrange to have assistance?
- How much will this treatment cost me? What other options are available that are equally effective and possibly less expensive?

Questions to ask about clinical trials

- What are my options for standard treatment?
- What other treatments through clinical trials are available to me?
- How will my experience differ if I enroll in this clinical trial, as opposed to standard treatment. For example, are there different risks, extra tests, a different time commitment,

schedule, or costs?

- What is the goal of this clinical trial? Is this a phase I, II, or III clinical trial? What does this mean?
- Where will I receive the clinical trial treatment?
- What costs will I have to pay if I join this trial? What costs will be covered by my insurance or the clinical trial?

Questions to ask about planning follow-up care

- What is the chance that the cancer will come back? Should I watch for specific signs or symptoms?
- Is there anything more I can do to reduce the chance that my cancer will return?
- What long-term side effects or late effects are possible based on the cancer treatment I received?
- What follow-up tests will I need and how often will I need them?
- How do I get a treatment summary and survivorship care plan to keep in my personal records?
- Who will be leading my follow-up care?
- What tests will I have during my follow-up visit?
- What survivorship support services are available to me? To my family?

Questions for patients who smoke

- What are the benefits of me quitting smoking, even after a cancer diagnosis?

- How can you help me to quit smoking?

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

Links

[1] <http://www.cancer.net/cancer-types/lung-cancer-non-small-cell/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/19162>