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## [Myelodysplastic Syndromes - MDS - Questions to Ask the Doctor](#) [1]

This section has been reviewed and approved by the [Cancer.Net Editorial Board](#) [2], 11/2015

**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 on the side of your screen.

[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 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 subtype of MDS do I have?
- What risk group am I in? What does this mean?
- Can you explain my pathology report (laboratory test results) to me?
- What is my prognosis?

- How do I find a doctor who specializes in the treatment of MDS?

## **Questions to ask about choosing a treatment and managing side effects**

- What are my treatment options?
- Do I need to start treatment right away?
- Who will be part of my health care team, and what does each member do?
- Who will be coordinating my overall treatment?
- What clinical trials are open to me? 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 MDS, manage my symptoms, or both?
- How often will I need to be treated, and for how long will I receive treatment?
- Will treatment be given in the hospital, or can it be given at the doctor's office or clinic?
- Do I need someone to come with me when I get my treatment?
- What are the possible side-effects of this treatment, both in the short term and the long term?
- 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 treatment begins?
- If I'm worried about managing the costs related to my medical care, who can help me with these concerns?
- What follow-up tests will I need, and how often will I need them?
- What support services are available to me? To my family?
- Is there concern about this disease occurring in other members of my family?
- Whom should I call for questions or problems?
- Is there anything else I should be asking?

### **Questions to ask about having chemotherapy, immunotherapy, or a stem cell transplant**

- 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 MDS returning? Are there signs and symptoms I should watch for?
- What long-term side effects or late effects are possible based on the 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 coordinating my follow-up care?
- What survivorship support services are available to me? 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.*

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#### **Links**

[1] <http://www.cancer.net/cancer-types/myelodysplastic-syndromes-mds/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/19393>