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Penile Cancer - Questions to Ask the Doctor [1]

This section has been reviewed and approved by the Cancer.Net Editorial Board [2], 07/2013

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 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.

General questions:

- What type of penile cancer do I have?
- What is the stage and grade of the cancer? What does this mean?
- Can you explain my pathology report (laboratory test results) to me?
- What treatment options do I have?
- What clinical trials are open to me?
- What treatment plan do you recommend? Why?
- Do I need treatment right away?
- What is the goal of each treatment? Is it to eliminate the cancer, help me feel better, or both?
- Could I benefit from a second opinion? Why or why not?
- Who will be part of my health care team, and what does each member do?
- Who will be coordinating my overall treatment and follow-up care?
- 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?
- Will this treatment change how I urinate?
- Could this treatment affect my sex life? If so, how and for how long?
- Could this treatment affect my ability to have children? If so, should I talk with a fertility specialist before cancer treatment begins?
- Should I see a psychologist, counselor, or other professional to help me deal with any fear and body image concerns?
- If I?m worried about managing the costs related to my cancer care, who can help me with

these concerns?
- Whom should I call for questions or problems?

For people who need surgery:

- Will I need to stay in the hospital for this surgery? For how long?
- What are the common side effects of this surgery?
- Do I have options other than surgery?

For people who need radiation therapy or laser therapy:

- What type of therapy am I getting?
- How can I prepare for this treatment?
- What side effects can I expect from this treatment, and how can they be managed?
- Do I have other options for treatment?

For people who need chemotherapy or immunotherapy:

- What type of drugs will I receive?
- How do I prepare for this treatment?
- What side effects can I expect from this treatment, and how can they be managed?
- How likely is this therapy to be successful? Are there other options?

After treatment:

- What are the chances that the cancer will return?
- What follow-up tests do I need, and how often do I need them?
- What support services are available to me? To my family?

The next section offers some more resources that may be helpful to you. Use the menu on the side of your screen to select Additional Resources, or you can select another section, to continue reading this guide.

Links:
[1] http://www.cancer.net/cancer-types/penile-cancer/questions-ask-doctor
[2] http://www.cancer.net/about-us
[3] http://www.cancer.net/node/24958
[4] http://www.cancer.net/node/25555