

## [Sarcoma, Soft Tissue - Questions to Ask the Doctor](#) [1]

This section has been reviewed and approved by the [Cancer.Net Editorial Board](#) [2], 05/2016

**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 sarcoma do I have?
- Has this diagnosis been reviewed by a pathologist who is experienced in the diagnosis and classification of sarcoma?
- Can you explain my pathology report (laboratory test results) to me?
- What stage and grade is the sarcoma? What does this mean?
- What does my diagnosis mean?

- Where is the tumor located?
- Should I see a sarcoma specialist?
- Was my case discussed in a multidisciplinary conference? What does this mean?

## **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?
- What treatment plan do you recommend? Why?
- 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?
- Who will be part of my health care team, and what does each member do?
- Who will be leading my overall treatment?
- 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?

- What support services are available to me? To my family?
- Whom should I call for questions or problems?
- Is there anything else I should be asking?

## **Questions to ask about having surgery**

- Should I have a biopsy before surgery?
- What will happen during this surgery?
- How long will the operation take?
- Will the surgery be performed in en-bloc resection? What does this mean?
- How much experience does this surgeon have with sarcoma? How many sarcoma operations has he or she done in the past year?
- What are the possible side effects of my surgery, both in the short term and long term?
- How long will I be in the hospital?
- Does the stage of cancer affect the decision for surgery? How?
- Do I need chemotherapy and/or radiation before the surgery? After the surgery?
- Will I need rehabilitation after the surgery?
- If surgery is on an arm or leg, what will my arm/leg look like after surgery?

Questions to ask about having radiation therapy

- What type of radiation therapy is recommended?
- How experienced is the radiation oncologist with sarcoma? How many people with sarcoma has he or she treated in the past year?
- How many treatments will I need, and how long will each one take?
- What side effects can I expect from this treatment?
- What can be done to prevent or to treat the side effects?

## **Questions to ask about having chemotherapy or targeted therapy**

- What type of treatment is recommended?
- What is the goal of this treatment?
- How experienced is the medical oncologist with sarcoma? How many people with sarcoma has he or she treated in the past year?
- Are other chemotherapy or targeted treatments available?
- Should I consider a clinical trial?
- How many treatments will I need? How long will each take?
- 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 side effects?

## 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?
- 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 survivorship support services are available to me? To my family?

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.

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### Links

[1] <http://www.cancer.net/cancer-types/sarcoma-soft-tissue/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/19617>