

Unknown Primary - Questions to Ask the Doctor [1]

This section has been reviewed and approved by the [Cancer.Net Editorial Board](#) [2], 03/2014

ON THIS PAGE: You will find some questions to ask your doctor or another member 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.

During the initial evaluation

- Where exactly is the tumor?
- What are the results of the biopsy?
- Can you explain my pathology report (laboratory test results) to me?
- Have specialized tests been done by the pathologist to help find the primary site?
- Would a molecular profiling assay of my biopsy specimen be helpful in predicting a primary site?
- Is another biopsy necessary to provide the pathologist with an optimal specimen to examine?
- What tests or scans are available to help identify a primary site?
- Should I get a second opinion?

Before receiving treatment

- Does my cancer fit into any of the subgroups of CUP that require specific treatment?
- Have specialized pathologic studies of my tumor biopsy resulted in a prediction of where my cancer started. If so, will my treatment follow the guidelines for the predicted cancer type?
- What are my treatment options?
- Are there clinical trials that are available 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 cancer, help me feel better, or both?
- What is my prognosis?
- 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 each 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, or 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 related to my cancer 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?
- Whom should I call for questions or problems?

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/unknown-primary/questions-ask-doctor>

[2] <http://www.cancer.net/about-us>

[3] <http://www.cancer.net/node/24958>

[4] <http://www.cancer.net/node/29951>