

[Unknown Primary - Questions to Ask the Doctor](#) [1]

This section has been reviewed and approved by the [Cancer.Net Editorial Board](#) [2], 03/2015

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.

Questions to ask after the initial evaluation

- Where exactly is the tumor?
- How large 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 cancer classifier assay of my biopsy specimen help predict a primary site?
- Will I need to have another biopsy 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?

Questions to ask about choosing a treatment and managing side effects

- 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?
- Has my tumor been profiled for molecular abnormalities that can be targeted by specific drugs?
- 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?
- 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 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 specific treatments

- 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 prevent or manage the side effects?

Questions to ask about planning follow-up care

- What is the risk of the cancer 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.

Links

[1] <http://www.cancer.net/es/node/19697>

[2] <http://www.cancer.net/es/node/51>

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

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

[5] <http://www.cancer.net/node/19698>