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Choosing Wisely®: Top Five Cancer-Related Tests, Procedures, and Treatments That Many Patients Do Not Need

Listen to the Cancer.Net Podcast:The Top Five List in Oncology ? What This Means for Patients, with Dr. Allen Lichter[1], adapted from this content.

Being diagnosed and treated for cancer is a complex process, often filled with many tests, procedures, and treatments that may not be familiar to you. Learning more about these tests and treatments can help you understand what to expect when having them, but how do you know which ones actually increase your chance of recovering from cancer and maintaining the best quality of life and which ones increase side effects without improving quality of life?

To help patients answer these questions, the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) joined with the American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM) Foundation and eight other medical specialty societies in the Choosing Wisely® campaign. The campaign's goals are to improve the value of each patient's medical care, meaning that patients receive the tests, procedures, and treatments that are most likely to improve their lives without overburdening them with unnecessary costs [2]. To achieve this goal, experts in every field of medicine took a careful look and came up with the top five tests, procedures, and treatments that are misused or overused in each field.

For oncology, a panel of experts carefully reviewed the research and created this list of the "Top Five" tests, procedures, and treatments that are often used in cancer care but have not been shown to increase the chance of recovery or quality of life for most patients. By avoiding these tests, procedures, and treatments, ASCO hopes that patients can continue to receive high-quality cancer care without unnecessary side effects and costs. This summary is designed to help patients talk with their doctors about the purpose and goals of specific cancer-related tests and procedures, to determine which options are right for them.

Links:
[1] http://www.cancer.net/sites/cancer.net/files/top_five_list_in_oncology.mp3
[2] http://www.cancer.net/node/24865