

CANCER CARE

# Important questions to ask your oncologist

Facing a cancer diagnosis can trigger a whirlwind of emotions. It's natural to feel overwhelmed. Adopting a proactive approach by asking questions is one of the most powerful steps you can take to regain control and feel confident moving forward.

## Overview

This guide equips you with essential questions to ask your oncologist so you can gain a clear understanding of your diagnosis and treatment options.

Good oncologists welcome your questions and want you to feel informed. The more you ask, the better they can tailor a treatment plan to your unique needs and preferences.



If you or your dependent has been diagnosed with cancer, or if test results indicate the possibility, Carrum Health is here for you. We'll connect you with some of the top cancer specialists in the country who can provide an expert second opinion—**at no cost to you.**

You'll also have access to a dedicated Carrum care navigator who will provide step-by-step guidance throughout your journey.

# Know your health.

## Understand your diagnosis.

At your appointment, take time to make sure you understand your diagnosis. These questions can help get you started:

- What is my diagnosis? What type of cancer do I have?
- Where is the cancer in my body?
- What stage is the cancer?
- Do I need more tests to determine the type or stage of cancer?
- What is the prognosis for my condition, and what factors may affect it?
- How quickly does this cancer typically grow?
- How urgently should I start treatment?
- How many years have you been treating people with this type of cancer?
- How many people do you treat each year? How often do you see cases like mine?
- Would you recommend that I get a second opinion?



*Tip: Your Carrum Health benefit provides a complimentary second opinion from a team of experts at one of the country's top cancer care centers. This service is **provided at no cost to you\*** and can often be completed virtually, from the comfort of your own home.*

# Take control.

## Clarify your treatment options.

Your cancer treatment plan may involve complex discussions with your oncologist. Take time to understand your options before moving forward. Don't feel rushed into starting treatment ASAP, and don't hesitate to ask follow-up questions or request clarification if anything remains unclear.

- What is the recommended course of treatment?
- Do I need more tests to determine the best course of treatment?
- How strong is the evidence that this is the right plan of care?
- Is there disagreement in the field about the best course of treatment?
- What other specialists did you consult?
- Who else will be on my cancer team?
- When should I begin treatment?
- How often will treatments occur?
- What should I expect during treatment? Will there be any side effects?
- How will this affect my daily routine?
- How do most people feel during treatment?
- What specialists will I see during the course of treatment?
- Am I potentially eligible for a clinical trial? (if of interest)



*Tip: Specialized pathologists and radiologists, and oncologists are skilled at noticing details that others may miss. They also stay informed on the latest research and can provide valuable insights into new treatment options.*

## Clarity counts.

## Be confident in the next steps.

Make sure you have a clear understanding of the road ahead. Ask questions that delve into the specifics of your treatment plan, potential restrictions, adjustments that may need to be made, and any available supportive care options.

- Do I need to schedule surgery or set up regular appointments for chemotherapy?
- If I need radiation therapy, how many days a week will it be? For how many weeks? How long will each treatment last?
- If I need surgery, how long will it take to recover? How long will I stay in the hospital?
- Will I be able to work or fulfill other obligations while I receive treatments?
- What support resources are available to help me cope with my diagnosis?
- What information can you share with me that I can review at home?
- What are good sources of information online?



*Tip: When you use your Carrum Health benefit for cancer care, you'll have up to 2 years of virtual support from oncology-certified nurses who can answer your questions about treatment and side effects and offer personalized tips to navigate your unique situation.*