



TREATMENT

Talking Through Treatment for the Best Care

It's important to communicate with your healthcare team once your treatment plan is in place. Maintaining good communication is as important as ever.

For a cancer patient in treatment, being able to talk openly and honestly with your healthcare team is very important. Good communication helps you receive the best care and keeps you safe during treatment.

TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR HEALTHCARE TEAM

- Keep a list of your questions in a designated notebook and take it with you to all appointments.
- Share your medical records and lab results with all of the healthcare professionals you see. Encourage your providers to talk with each other to receive comprehensive care. You may need to sign forms to allow your providers to share information.
- Tell your hematologist-oncologist about any medications prescribed by other healthcare providers. Ask if the medication will interfere or react with your cancer treatment.
- Let your healthcare team know as soon as possible if you experience any new or worsening side effects or symptoms. Even if the side effect is expected, keep your healthcare team informed. There may be things you can do to lessen side effects.



- Ask for a referral to palliative care. Palliative care (or supportive care) is for anyone with a serious illness regardless of age, stage or prognosis and can make cancer treatment easier for yourself and your family.
- Talk to your healthcare team if you are interested in complementary or alternate medicine (CAM). Some complementary therapies are safe alongside traditional cancer treatment; others are not. Do not start any additional treatments or therapies without first discussing them with your healthcare team.
- Collect contact information and business cards from all of the members of your healthcare team. Add the information to your phone's contact list or take pictures of the business cards.

PRIMARY CONTACT AT DOCTOR'S OFFICE

Name _____
 Phone _____
 Email _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT AT DOCTOR'S OFFICE

Name _____
 Phone _____

All of your questions are important. Do not feel embarrassed to ask them. You deserve to have your concerns addressed.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR HEALTHCARE TEAM

Make sure you understand the answers to the following questions:

- Are there any foods, medications or activities I need to avoid during treatment?
- Is it safe for me to work or go to school during treatment?
- What side effects might I experience with this treatment?
- What side effects or symptoms require a trip to the emergency room?
- What side effects or symptoms require a call to the healthcare team?
- What can I do to manage side effects?
- Will you refer me to palliative care (or supportive care) for side effect management?
- What kind of testing will be done to monitor my disease and treatment?
- How will I know if the treatment is effective? What options are available if the treatment is not effective?
- Are there any precautions my caregiver or I should take when storing, handling and administering my medication? (This questions is for patients getting treatment at home, not at a hospital or treatment center.)
- Is it safe for my partner and I to be intimate during treatment? Are there any special precautions I need to take?
- Where can I turn to for help with financial or practical questions?

Visit www.LLS.org/WhatToAsk for the full **Communicating With Your Healthcare Team** series and printable question guides.

Update Your Healthcare Team

Keep your healthcare team up-to-date with any changes related to the following:

- All medications, including vitamins, supplements and over-the-counter medications
 - Do not start or stop taking any medications, vitamins, or supplements without consulting your doctor.
- Alcohol, smoking and recreational drug use
- New or worsening symptoms or side effects
- Travel plans
- Health insurance coverage
- Your contact information such as phone number or address

Your relationship with your healthcare team is built on trust. Do not withhold information. Withholding information from your healthcare team can be dangerous and you may not receive the best care.

GET SUPPORT. REACH OUT TO OUR INFORMATION SPECIALISTS

Contact us at **800.955.4572** or
www.LLS.org/InformationSpecialists.