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## The Cancer Recovery Pyramid – Medical Resource #1

# Ask Your Doctor These Questions

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**Doctors, nurses and treatment therapies obviously play a critical role in cancer recovery. However, successful outcomes often hinge on this: Patients taking charge.** Here is a list of questions to help you be an active healthcare consumer and fully understand your options before committing to a treatment program.

### OVERVIEW

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- What specific type of cancer do I have?
- Where exactly is it located?
- What are my risks if I do not treat this disease?
- Do genetic factors cause this type of cancer?
- Are other members of my family at risk?

### SYMPTOMS

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- What are common symptoms of this type of cancer?
- What can I do to these reduce symptoms?
- What activities may make symptoms worse?
- If new symptoms arise or existing ones worsen, what should I do?

### DIAGNOSIS

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- What diagnostic tests have you performed?
- What other tests are necessary?
- What will these tests tell us?
- Where can I go to have these tests?
- How can I prepare for each test or procedure?
- When will I get results from the pathologist?
- How will I receive the pathology report?

- Will you explain, in patient-friendly language, the results to me?
- Is there any indication a second pathology report will be necessary?
- If I seek a second opinion, will I have to repeat any tests or procedures?

### STAGE

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- What is the stage of my cancer?
- In patient-friendly language, what does this mean?
- Has cancer spread to my lymph nodes or anywhere else?
- How will you use my cancer stage to determine my treatment?

### TREATMENT

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- What are my treatment options?
- Which treatments, or combination of treatments, do you recommend? Why?
- What is the goal of the treatment plan you are recommending?
- Who will be part of my treatment team? What does each team member do?
- How much experience do you have treating this type of cancer?
- How much experience does the team have treating this type of cancer?

- Will I need to be hospitalized for treatment or is it done in an outpatient setting?
- What is the expected timeline for my treatment plan?
- How will the treatment affect my daily life? Will I be able to work, exercise and perform my usual activities?
- What are the short-term side effects of this cancer treatment?
- What are the long-term side effects of this cancer treatment?

### SUPPORT

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- What support services will be available to me?
- What support services will be available to my family?
- Who should I call with questions or concerns during nonbusiness hours?
- May I contact you or a nurse to talk about additional information I find?
- Who handles health insurance concerns in your office?

### FOLLOW-UP CARE

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- What follow-up tests will I need?
- How often will I need them?