

Improving your well-being through clear communication with your team

As someone living with cancer, you and your loved ones may have questions for your healthcare providers at any point – whether it's at your initial diagnosis, during treatment or when you are in remission.

Regular and productive conversations with your loved ones, as well as your oncology care team, can help you feel more confident in your overall treatment plan.

A GSK survey conducted with patients living with ovarian cancer found that 49% who are in treatment or who have been treated admit that they find not being sure of the path forward after diagnosis to be very or extremely challenging. We believe you should be empowered throughout each step of treatment, which means having access to the best of resources in order to gain more control over your experience.

The following are some questions to help you and your loved ones foster a stronger, more effective dialogue with your oncology care team during the course of your treatment.



Before your appointment

- Prepare a list of specific questions for your care team based on your present needs, as well as anything that arises ahead of your next visit.
- Consider if you want a family member or close friend to come with you to the appointment for support and to take notes.
- Bring this discussion guide, extra paper and a pen to write down key points from your conversation.

We have provided potential questions below that may be relevant to you.

Conversation Cues

The hardest part of any conversation is simply starting. It's a good idea to keep a journal or notes about symptoms or side effects you are experiencing, including frequency and severity, and bring it to each appointment. You may also want to note any changes in your day-to-day life, personal and treatment goals, and your concerns, as all of these are important for your healthcare provider to know.

Along with your journal, and your specific questions that you bring to your appointments, the below may help to kick-off a meaningful discussion with your doctor to ensure you leave feeling that your questions were answered.

General questions:

What is your preferred method of contact for additional questions? Email? Phone? How long will it take for you or your staff to get back to me?

If you are newly diagnosed:

What do I need to know about my treatment plan?
How do my treatments work?

Should I consider genetic testing for possible mutations and genetic counseling?

- Do I need those results before I start treatment?
- What are my options once I get the results back?

What side effects should I expect? How will this impact my life?

What do I need to know about ongoing monitoring?

Are my treatments covered by my health insurance?

What else do I need to do to take care of myself?
Why is it important that I do it?

What happens after I finish treatment?

- What are my chances of recurrence?
- What are my options if my cancer recurs?

Are there any support groups or online resources I can look into to be better informed and get peer-to-peer support?

If your treatment is ongoing:

Do I have new test results since my last appointment?

What do the results mean? What will happen next?

What treatment options are available at each stage throughout my treatment experience?

Is my current treatment plan still the best option for me?

- How do I know if my treatment is working?
- Are there other treatment options I should consider?

If new options are suggested:

- Why do I need this new option?
- What do I need to know about this treatment? How does it work? How is it administered?
- What side effects should I expect? How will this impact my life? What do I need to know about ongoing monitoring?
- Is this treatment covered by my health insurance?
- What else do I need to do? Why is it important that I do it?

Should I consider a clinical trial?

If you are in remission:

How frequently should I come in for check-in visits to monitor my disease?

What do I do while my cancer is in remission?

- Do you have any recommendations, tips, or approaches to help me minimize or manage, any anxiety I may feel during this time when my disease is in remission, but we are monitoring the cancer's growth?

What are my chances of recurrence?

- How long are most people in remission before the cancer might return?

What symptoms should I look for that would signal a recurrence?

Why would my cancer recur?

What do I do if my cancer recurs?

I've heard the term "watchful waiting" or "observation" used – what does it mean?

- If I am not in treatment now, does it mean I get a "vacation" from my treatment? What side effects and impact on my lifestyle should I expect? What does progression-free survival mean? How is that related to remission?



If your cancer has maintenance therapy available:

What is maintenance treatment?

Should I consider a maintenance treatment during remission?

- What are my options for maintenance treatment?
- How will maintenance treatment impact my daily routine and lifestyle?
- How are maintenance treatments administered?
- Are there oral treatment options available? How frequently would I have to take it?
- What side effects should I be aware of with maintenance treatment?

Who can I reach out to for extra support during this time?

What are my treatment options now that my cancer has returned?

Is there a recurrence pattern that I can expect?

Notes

If you have recurred:

After your appointment

Even with the best preparation, you may think of new or different questions following your appointments. Remember to write down any thoughts, questions or concerns to ensure you ask at your next appointment. Or, if your oncology team offers an online communication system, secure the contact information or email addresses to reach out between visits.

Our Commitment

GSK Oncology is committed to solving some of the most challenging questions in cancer research to ultimately improve the standard of care for patients with cancer.

Our research aims to address unmet needs that move us toward the goal of maximizing patient survival and quality of life.

Areas of research include:

- Hematology
- Rare cancers
- Ovarian cancer
- Endometrial cancer
- Advanced non-small cell lung cancer
- Biliary tract cancer and others

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