



# YOUR FIRST ONCOLOGY VISIT





# PREPARING FOR YOUR ONCOLOGY APPOINTMENT

## What to bring

It's important to bring certain items with you to your first oncology appointment. Use the lists below when collecting what you may want to bring.

### Items for the oncologist

- Test results (e.g., labs, scans, biopsies)
- Signed release forms to send test results to oncologist
- Current prescription medicines
- Current over-the-counter medicines
- Vitamins
- Supplements

### Also consider bringing

- Notepad or paper
- Pencil or pen
- Recording device
- A friend or loved one for support
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



Depending on your diagnosis, your first oncology visit may be with one of the following:

**Medical oncologist:** This specialist diagnoses and oversees general patient care. They can also help with chemotherapy or other medicine-related treatments that are given by other specialists.

**Hematologist-oncologist:** This specialist diagnoses and treats patients who have blood cancers.

**Surgical oncologist:** This specialist is a surgeon who does biopsies and operations as part of treatment.

**Radiation oncologist:** This specialist performs radiation therapy as part of treatment.



# BEFORE YOUR APPOINTMENT

Your oncologist will want to capture an overview of your health and any tests you've had. Fill in the information below if it is relevant to your situation.

## What led to your upcoming oncology appointment?

Are there any related health care appointments you've had? \_\_\_\_\_

List symptoms (if any) that you've had. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Tests (e.g., labs, scans, biopsies) you've had and what led to your getting tested: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Surgeries (cancer or noncancer related)

## Date of surgery

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Have you been diagnosed with cancer prior to your current diagnosis?

If yes, what type of cancer? \_\_\_\_\_

When were you diagnosed? \_\_\_\_\_

What treatment(s) did you receive? \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you been in remission? \_\_\_\_\_

## Other medical conditions

(e.g., diabetes, high blood pressure)

## Doctor who treats it

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_





# DURING YOUR APPOINTMENT

Share questions and concerns you may have. Here are some example questions to ask during your appointment, and space for you to write the answers down.

## ***General and diagnosis-related questions***

What is my diagnosis?

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Can we discuss my test results so I can better understand them?

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How often will I have oncology appointments?

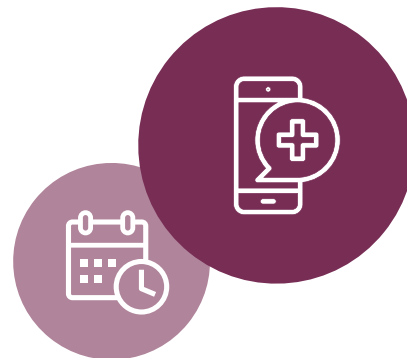
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For after-hours questions, whom should I contact, and how can I contact them?

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What is cancer biomarker testing and is it right for me?

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## ***Treatment-related questions***

How is a treatment plan made?

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What are my treatment options?

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Why is this specific treatment option being recommended to me?

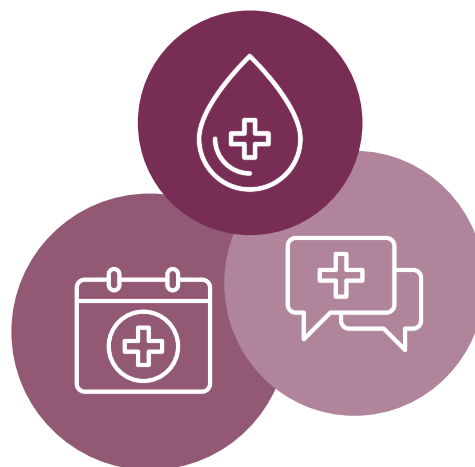
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When will I start treatment?

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How long should I expect to be on treatment?

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**Treatment-related questions** *(continued)*

How can I best prepare for treatment?

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How will I know if the treatment is working?

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How might treatment affect my mental and emotional well-being?

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Will treatment affect my fertility and, if so, how?

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**Body-related questions**

What physical changes can I expect?

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Can I do the same physical activities I've been doing?

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Who should I tell if I have symptoms that worry me?

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**Additional questions**

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# GETTING THE INFORMATION YOU NEED

## Remember, you're a DEAR member of your health care team

You can use the below DEAR exercise before your health care visits to help make sure you're prepared to get the information you need. Being an active participant in your health care means recognizing that you have your own unique questions, needs, and concerns—make sure you get them answered! Here's how DEAR works to prepare you for your health care visits.

- D** **Describe** how you're feeling with your full attention
- E** **Express** your questions and concerns ahead of time so you'll be prepared
- A** **Assert** what you need, how you feel, and what you think about your current situation
- R** **Reinforce** anything else you need to feel confident and ready for your appointment

How can you prepare to be a DEAR member of your health care team for your upcoming oncology appointment?

D \_\_\_\_\_

E \_\_\_\_\_

A \_\_\_\_\_

R \_\_\_\_\_



### Give yourself a break

One thing you can do anywhere, at anytime, is focus on just one breath to help yourself relax.

Try it. Breathe in, then breathe out. Focus your attention on how this feels, where you notice the air moving, how your chest and abdomen move. Think of it as a little mental push-up. That's it, or if you want to extend it to a few more breaths, that's fine too.





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