

## Newly Diagnosed Toolkit

We have collected tips and advice given by Belongers to help you understand your diagnosis, and navigate the treatment plan, and overall care.

Prepare your questions before the meeting with the medical team. Take a notepad. If possible, take a friend or family member with you to the appointments. Ask them to take notes during your appointment or record your session.

**What to take to your first appointment?** Medical and diagnostic reports, including the physical copies of scans, x-rays, MRIs, CTs, or other imaging tests, blood test results, and the report of the biopsy if performed. Do not forget your insurance cards. A list of all current medications that include over-the-counter pain relievers, vitamins, herbs, and supplements with each dosage.

**Questions to ask at your visit:** What type of cancer was found? What is the stage/grade of cancer? Has it spread? What does this stage mean regarding the treatment and prognosis? Can you explain the pathology report? Will other tests be needed before starting treatment? Should I have a dental evaluation prior to starting treatment?

**Cancer treatment** - What are the treatment options? Which treatment is recommended, and why? Am I a good match for a clinical trial? What is the goal of my treatment? Should genetic testing be considered? What side effects does this treatment have? What should I do to manage them? How often will I have treatments? How long will they last? How should I prepare for treatment? Do I need someone to escort me to the treatment? Will I be able to drive myself home after the treatment? Do I need to be admitted to the hospital for the treatment? Will I be able to be near children and pets directly after the treatment? Do I need to prepare my home environment? Will I need to modify my daily routine?

**Cancer research and clinical trials** – How do I find suitable clinical trials?

**Nutrition** – Do I need to modify my eating pattern? Are there any recommended supplements and is there anything I should avoid? Can you recommend a nutritionist for a personalized diet plan?

**Young patients** - Will treatment induce infertility? If so, is there a way to preserve fertility?

**Medical team contact person** - Whom should I contact with questions? Is there an after-hours or an emergency contact person?

**Financial** - Who can be contacted regarding financial assistance for treatment? Who can help me?

**Learning more to stay in control:** What are other reliable resources to learn more?

**General** - Is remaining at work/school a possibility? Can I still exercise? What steps can be taken to stay as healthy as possible before, during, and after treatment? Are there support services available for myself and my family?

Please remember it is your right and you shouldn't feel uncomfortable to request a second opinion.

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