



PINK HOPE

Questions For My Cancer Care Team: Newly Diagnosed Breast or Ovarian Cancer

Your cancer care team will be the best source of reliable and relevant information about your cancer and its treatment. So it's important for you to be able to discuss your questions and concerns openly with them. Many people who have had cancer feel it is helpful to prepare a list of questions you want to ask. **Below, we've put together a list of questions that other women with breast or ovarian cancer found helpful to ask their cancer care team.** Your healthcare professionals may have already answered some of these questions, and some questions may not be relevant to you. But we hope this list is a helpful guide for you.

Many women who have had breast or ovarian cancer also tell us that it is helpful to take a family member or someone you trust with you to your appointments for support. This is something you may want to consider.

About the cancer

Your cancer specialist will give you information about your cancer but don't be afraid to ask if you want to know more.

- What are the specifics of this type of cancer?
- What stage is it at and what body parts are affected?
- How fast is it growing?
- What is the likelihood that it will spread and where to?
- What is driving the growth of the cancer and is there anything I can do immediately?

About tests and investigations

Your cancer care team will tell you what tests are required and give you information about the results. But you should feel comfortable asking questions or asking for more details.

- What do the results of my pathology/imaging/other test show? Can you please talk me through them?
- Is there anything else in my pathology/imaging/other test results that shows cause for concern?

- Do you recommend any further scans (e.g. PET, CT or MRI)?
- Do you recommend genetic testing and/or a genetic counsellor?
- Is a biopsy required?
- What does this pathology/imaging/other test entail? Is there anything I should be aware of before I attend the test?
- How long does it take to get results from this pathology/imaging/other test?

About treatment

- What are my treatment options and what do you recommend is the best option(s) for me?
- Why do you recommend this treatment over the others?
- How well does this treatment work in situations like mine?
- How soon should I start treatment?
- What will treatment actually entail?
 - If surgery is recommended, how invasive will the surgery be and what will the recovery process be?
 - If chemotherapy is required, how many medicines, how often and for how long? Do you recommend a port-a-cath?
 - If radiation is required, how many sessions and over what period of time?
- Do I need any additional treatment required in addition to this (e.g. hormone therapy)?

About side effects

- What side effects of my treatment(s) should I be aware of?
 - Is there anything that can help with common side effects?
 - Who is the best person(s) for me to report side effects to? How can I reach them?
 - Is there any particular symptoms / red flags for serious side effects that I should be aware of?
- How will my treatment(s) affect my fertility?
 - What are my options for preserving my fertility before treatment commences?
 - What measures do you recommend for minimising the effects of my treatment on my fertility?
- What measures do you recommend for minimising hair loss?
 - Do you recommend cold caps? If so, how can I access these?
- What measures do you recommend for minimising nail loss?
 - Do you recommend cold gloves and socks? If so, how can I access them?

Therapies to help with symptoms, side effects and quality of life

A diagnosis of cancer can have an overwhelming impact on your physical health but also on your mental and emotional wellbeing. Our mental and emotional wellbeing are just as important as our physical health. So it is important to try to take care of these, as we do our bodies.

Some people find that certain therapies can help them cope. Ask your cancer care team if some of these may be suitable for you and how you can access them:

- Psychological therapies or counselling
- Mindful meditation
- Relaxation techniques
- Massage
- Physiotherapy
- Exercise

You may also want to ask about local support groups available to you.

Expenses and health Insurance

- I don't have private health insurance, what part of my tests and treatment will be subsidised by Medicare? What out-of-pocket expenses will there be?
- I have private health insurance, what part of my test and treatment will be covered by that? What out-of-pocket expenses will there be?
- Which allied health services can I access through the Medicare?
- What other financial support, if any, may I be eligible for?

Know Your Risk is developed by Pink Hope and has been reviewed by practising Australian health professionals, including a medical oncologist and a genetic counsellor.