

Doctor office visit checklist

Before the visit

- Gather your questions
- Identify symptoms
- Check your loved one's file
- Call to confirm appointment
- Take a list of any medicines the patient is currently taking
- If the patient has seen a doctor before for a similar problem, take the record from the visit with you

During the visit

- Help the patient describe symptoms accurately
- Ask questions
- Record the doctor's instructions
- Discuss recommendations
- Verify follow-up
- State the main problem first
- Describe the symptoms
- Describe the patient's past experiences with the same problem.

At the end of the visit, ask:

- Does the patient need to return for another visit?
- Can I phone in for test results?
- What danger signs should we look for?
- When does the patient need to report back about the condition?
- What else do we need to know?

After the visit

- Review your notes
- Check prescription
- Discuss the visit
- Update your calendar

Doctor office visit checklist

- Call for test results
- What's wrong?
- What might happen next?
- Ask what you can do at home

Being prepared

- Post emergency information in a prominent place
- Have updated information on your loved one ready to go
- Enlist a friend to be your ER buddy before a crisis occurs
- Pack a bag ahead of time

Questions for newly diagnosed patients to ask their doctor

1. What type of lung cancer do I have?

2. What type of doctors will I need to take care of me for this problem?

3. How much experience do they and the facility have with this problem?

4. What test do I need to determine how far the cancer has spread and what treatment I need?

5. What is the stage of my lung cancer and what does this mean for my treatment?

6. What are my treatment options? Which do you believe are the best ones, and why?

7. How may I go about getting a second opinion on my diagnosis and treatment options?

8. What is a clinical trial and should I enter one?

9. Are you board certified?

10. How do you keep up to date on current treatments?

Questions for newly diagnosed patients to ask their doctor

11. How many times have you performed this specific surgery [if surgery is being recommended]?

12. Can I talk with other patients who have had the same or similar surgery [or treatments]?

13. Are you willing to answer my questions during doctor visits? Outside of doctor visits?

14. Will you answer my questions directly?

15. Will you return my phone calls in a timely manner?

16. Are you willing to honor my personal decision-making style?

17. Do you accept my insurance?

18. Who provides backup care if you are out of town or unavailable? Are they board certified?

19. Do you participate in clinical trials?

Questions about testing

Before testing

1. What tests do I need?

2. Why do I need these tests? What are you trying to find?

3. What is involved in these tests?

4. Who will perform the tests? Where will they be performed?

5. How long does it take for each test?

6. Are there any possible complications from these tests?

7. Do I need to follow any restrictions before the tests?

8. Do any of the tests hurt?

9. What will each test determine?

10. How will these test results be helpful?

Questions about testing

11. When will I get the results? How will you notify me?

After testing

1. What have my tests shown?

2. What do the test results indicate?

3. Should I get a second opinion?

General treatment questions

1. If I need surgery, what type is it and how is the recovery?

2. If I need radiation therapy, what type is it and how long will it take?

3. If I need chemotherapy, what medications will be used and for how long? When will I need it to begin?

4. What type of side effects should I expect from radiation and/or chemotherapy?

5. How are these side effects managed? Can they be prevented?

6. Are any side effects permanent, such as not being able to have children?

7. Will I be able to work during chemotherapy?

8. Should I go out on disability?

9. Will my health insurance cover the treatments?

10. If I feel sad or overwhelmed by everything that is happening, who can I go to?

General treatment questions

11. Will I need blood or medications to raise my white cells or red cells?

12. Do I need advice on diet and vitamins or supplements?

13. Am I allowed to drink alcohol during my treatment?

14. Should I and my family take any special precautions against infection while I am being treated?

15. Can you help with quitting smoking?

16. Should I get a flu shot or pneumonia shot?

17. What tests are done to check on my cancer during and after treatment?

18. What are the office numbers to call for routine and after-hours calls?

19. What signs or symptoms do you want to be called for? For what signs or symptoms should I go right to the emergency room?

Questions for medical oncologist

1. What type of lung cancer do I have?

2. What stage is my lung cancer?

3. If my cancer has spread, where else is it located in my body?

4. Do I need more tests?

5. What does my post-treatment care look like?

6. What rehabilitation support and services are available for me?

Questions for pulmonologist

1. What screening or x-ray methods will you use?

2. Will I be exposed to harmful substances?

3. How long will it take to obtain the results?

4. Who will explain my screening results to me?

5. What is a lung biopsy?

6. How will you conduct the biopsy? Is it painful?

7. Will I need to have anesthesia for the biopsy?

8. Will a biopsy require an overnight hospital stay?

9. How do you read a biopsy?

10. Am I more susceptible to diseases such as bronchitis?

Questions for pulmonologist

11. Why am I short of breath?

12. Are there exercises to help me regain my breathing capacity?

13. How will we know if the treatment is working?

14. Am I at risk for a relapse?

15. Will I be able to continue work/school?

16. Are there any alternative treatment options?

Questions for radiation oncologist

1. What are the treatment choices available for my type of lung cancer?

2. Which treatments do you recommend?

3. How long will each treatment last, and how will I receive it?

4. What results do you expect?

5. What are the side effects and how can they be minimized?

6. How long will I need radiation?

7. How will we know if the radiation is working?

8. Can the treatment cause other problems such as heart, lung, kidney damage/disease, or fertility problems?

9. Will I have to receive other treatments at the same time and how will that effect the radiation?

10. Are there any long-term effects or dangers?



Questions for radiation oncologist

11. Will I be able to continue work/school during treatment?

Questions for deciding on a treatment

1. Would you please write down the exact type of lung cancer I have?

2. May I have a copy of my pathology report?

3. Has my lung cancer spread beyond the place where it started?

4. What is the stage of my lung cancer? What does that mean in my case?

5. Are there other tests that need to be done before we can decide on treatment?

6. What treatment choices do I have?

7. What do you suggest and why?

8. What is the goal of this lung cancer treatment?

9. How long will treatment last? What will it involve? Where will it be done?

10. What are the chances my lung cancer can be cured with these options?

Questions for deciding on a treatment

11. What risks or side effects are there to the treatment you suggest?

12. Is there a way to minimize the side effects?

13. How long will treatment last? How often will I get it?

14. What type of follow-up will I need after lung cancer treatment?

15. Can the treatment cause other problems such as heart, lung, or kidney damage/disease, or fertility problems?

16. Will I lose my hair? If so, what can I do about it?

17. What should I do to get ready for treatment?

18. What are the chances that the treatment won't work or the cancer will come back? What would we do then?

19. Are clinical trials an option for me? If so, how do I find one?

Questions to ask after treatment

1. How often will I need to have blood tests and /or imaging after treatment?

2. How often do I need to return for office visits?

3. How long will it take for my strength to come back?

4. Do I have any limitations on diet, exercise, or work?

5. How long before I am considered “cancer free”?

6. How would I know if the cancer were to come back?

7. What would my treatment be if the cancer were to come back?

Questions about surgery

General Questions

1. What is the name of the surgical procedure?

2. Why do I need surgery?

3. How soon should surgery take place?

4. What might happen if I delay or avoid the surgery?

5. Will you explain the surgery in simple terms?

6. How much of my lung(s) do you anticipate will need to be removed?

7. What are the risks and benefits of this surgery? What results should I expect from the surgery?

8. Are there any treatments I can have before surgery to shrink the tumor?

9. Are there any nonsurgical options?

Questions about surgery

10. Are there any less invasive surgery options?

11. What is the next step if this surgery doesn't work?

12. How much does the surgery cost? How can I find out?

About the Procedure

1. What should I do to prepare?

2. How is the surgery done?

3. How long will the surgery take?

4. What kind of anesthesia will be used (general, local, or regional)?

5. Will I have drains, catheters, or intravenous lines?

6. Is there a possibility that I will need a blood transfusion, and if so, can I bank my own blood before surgery?

7. How successful is this procedure?

Questions about surgery

8. What are the risks associated with this surgery?

9. How much experience do you have with this procedure?

10. Has the procedure been done often in this hospital or surgery center?

About Post-Surgery

1. How long will I have to remain in the hospital?

2. How will I feel after surgery?

3. How much pain is there after this type of surgery? How is it treated?

4. How long will it take for me to recuperate?

About What to Expect When You Get Home

1. What kind of care will I need at home? Are there any activity limitations?

2. How soon can I eat a regular meal?

Questions about surgery

3. How long will it be until I can resume normal activities?

4. What symptoms should I watch for and report?

5. Will I need other types of treatment after surgery?

6. How long will it be until I can safely receive other necessary treatments?

7. Are there alternatives to this treatment?

Reminder

1. Ask for other information about the surgery.
2. Ask about a second opinion.
3. Ask how much the surgery will cost and if there are ways to reduce the costs.
4. State any concerns you have about having the surgery.

Questions about radiation therapy

1. What kind of radiation therapy will I get?

2. How can radiation therapy help?

3. How many weeks will my course of radiation therapy last?

4. What kinds of side effects should I expect during my course of radiation therapy?

5. Will these side effects go away after radiation therapy is over?

6. What kind of late side effects should I expect after radiation therapy is over?

7. What can I do to manage these side effects?

8. What will you do to manage these side effects?

9. How can I learn more about radiation therapy?

Questions about chemotherapy

1. Why do I need chemotherapy?

2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of chemotherapy for me?

3. How successful is chemotherapy for my type of cancer?

4. Are there any other treatments I can have instead?

5. How much does treatment cost?

6. What drugs will I be receiving? How will they be given?

7. How often will I receive this treatment? How long will I have treatment?

8. Where will I have the chemotherapy? Can I have it close to where I live?

9. What are the possible side effects of this treatment and what can I do to control them?

10. Are there any complementary therapies that will help?

Questions about chemotherapy

11. How will I know if the treatment is working?

12. Will chemotherapy affect my sex life and fertility?

13. After treatment has finished, will I need checkups?

14. Who should I contact for information or if I have a problem during treatment? Who is my after-hours contact?

Questions about targeted therapy

1. Why do you recommend a targeted cancer therapy for me?

2. What mutation do I have?

3. What kind of targeted cancer therapy will I get?

4. Will targeted cancer therapy be my only treatment, or will it be combined with another treatment?

5. How often will I take this therapy and for how long?

6. How and when will I know if the treatment is working?

7. How often do I need to be seen between treatments for a physical exam and/or lab work?

8. Can I expect to see changes in my lab results while on this treatment?

9. Are there any tests or procedures I will need during the treatment?

10. What side effects can I expect?



Questions about targeted therapy

11. What can I do to manage these side effects?

12. How will this treatment affect my daily life? Will I be able to work, exercise, and perform my usual activities?

13. What tests will I need after treatment is completed?

14. Are there any long-term health issues I should expect from treatment with targeted therapy?

15. How much will my treatment cost?

Questions about angiogenesis inhibitors

1. Why do you recommend an angiogenesis inhibitor for me?

2. What treatment(s) will this be combined with?

3. How and where will this therapy be given, and for how long?

4. How and when will I know if the treatment is working?

5. How often do I need to be seen between treatments for a physical exam and/or lab work?

6. Are there any tests or procedures I will need during the treatment?

7. What side effects can I expect?

8. What can I do to manage these side effects?

9. How will this treatment affect my daily life? Will I be able to work, exercise, and perform my usual activities?

10. What tests will I need after treatment is completed?

Questions about angiogenesis inhibitors

11. Are there any long-term health issues I should expect from treatment with an angiogenesis inhibitor?

12. How much will my treatment cost?

13. Who should I contact for information or if I have a problem during treatment? Who is my after-hours contact?

Questions about immunotherapy

1. Why do you recommend immunotherapy for me?

2. Will immunotherapy be my only treatment or will it be combined with another treatment?

3. Where do I go to get my immunotherapy?

4. How will it be administered?

5. How often will I get my treatment? How long will it last?

6. How often do I need to be seen between treatments for a physical exam and/or lab work?

7. What side effects can I expect?

8. How will this treatment affect my daily life? Will I be able to work, exercise, and perform my usual activities?

9. Are there any tests or procedures I will need during the treatment?

10. When will you know whether or not the immunotherapy worked?



Questions about immunotherapy

11. What tests will I need after treatment is completed?

12. Are there any long-term health issues I should expect from treatment with immunotherapy?

13. How much will my treatment cost?

Questions about clinical trials

1. How do I know if I am a possible candidate for a clinical trial?

2. Are clinical trials only for people who have failed all other options?

3. If I am a candidate to receive an approved standard therapy, why should I participate in a clinical trial?

4. Are clinical trials safe?

5. What are some of the risks and benefits of participating in a clinical trial?

6. What is the goal of this trial? Who is sponsoring it?

7. What is known about the investigational drug being studied? Has it worked in previous trials? Is it the same as chemotherapy?

8. How will I be given the drug? How often and for how long?

9. Are there tests to determine if I am eligible for this trial?

Questions about clinical trials

10. What types of tests, scans, or other procedures are required during the trial, and how frequently will they need to be performed?

11. What side effects might I experience if I'm given the investigational drug? Are the side effects reversible, and can they be managed?

12. Are the side effects from the investigational drug worse than those I might experience with standard treatment? How severe could these side effects be?

13. Will I lose my hair?

14. Will I be able to continue working or go about my daily routine?

Questions about palliative care

1. What are your goals for palliative care for me?

2. What palliative care treatment(s) will I be getting?

3. Will these be combined with treatments for my lung cancer?

4. Where will I receive palliative care?

5. How long will I receive care?

6. Who will be my palliative care providers?

7. How much will my palliative care cost?

8. Are all of these costs covered by my insurance?



Hospice questions

1. Is the hospice Medicare-certified?

2. Has the hospice been surveyed by a state or federal oversight agency in the last 5 years?

3. Is the organization an NHPCO member and does it comply with all aspects of NHPCO's Standards for Hospice Programs?

4. Is the hospice accredited by a national organization?

5. Does the hospice conduct a family evaluation survey?

6. Does the hospice own or operate a care facility to provide home-like care in a hospice residence, hospital, or nursing home?

7. Are clinical staff (physicians, nurses, social workers) certified or credentialed in hospice and palliative care?

8. What services do volunteers offer, and if requested, how quickly will a volunteer be available?

9. Will staff come to the home if there is a crisis at any time of the day or night and on weekends? Who is available to make the home visit (nurses, doctors, social workers, chaplains)?



Hospice questions

10. If the patient needs to go to a hospital or nursing home, with which ones does/doesn't the hospice work?

11. What "extra" services does the hospice offer?

12. How long has the hospice been operating in the community?

13. How many patients are assigned at any one time to each hospice staff member who will be caring for the patient?

14. What screening and type of training do hospice volunteers receive before they are placed with patients and families?

15. How quickly can the intake/admissions staff come to begin the admissions process? Is someone available at night or on weekends?

16. What is the organization's governance structure?
