

This list is to help if you're not sure what to ask. The questions are organized into categories that match your Appointment Guide, making it easy to choose what fits your next appointment. You do not need to use every question. Simply select what feels most relevant and write those into your guide. Over time, your questions may change, and that's okay. This is meant to support you, not overwhelm you.

1. UNDERSTANDING WHAT IS HAPPENING

Start here to get the big picture in plain language.

- Can you walk me through my diagnosis in plain language? What is the exact type, stage, and what does that mean for me personally?
- How certain are we about this diagnosis or treatment plan?
- What do I need to understand most clearly right now?
- Is there anything about my case that makes it different from others with the same diagnosis?
- What should I be paying the most attention to right now?
- What is the goal of treatment right now—cure, control, or comfort? How realistic is that goal for my situation?
- What are the most important test results or scan findings I should know about today?

2. UNDERSTANDING MY CHOICES

Get clear on what's available and why.

- What are all the reasonable treatment choices right now, including clinical trials or newer options I might qualify for?
- Which option do you recommend for me, and why is it the best fit?
- What are we hoping this treatment will achieve in my case (cure, control, shrink the cancer, relieve symptoms)?
- If we choose the recommended treatment, what does success look like in 3 months, 6 months, and 1 year? How will we measure it?
- What are the pros and cons of each option for my lifestyle, work, and family?
- Is a second opinion or tumor board review something that would be helpful? I want to feel confident in the plan.

3. WEIGHING TRADEOFFS AND DECISIONS

These questions help you understand reasoning and make informed decisions.

- What are the biggest benefits and downsides of this treatment?
- What risks matter most in my particular situation?
- What are the likely short-term and long-term effects?
- How will we know if the treatment is working? What are the signs it is helping or not helping?
- What would make us change course once treatment starts?

3. WEIGHING TRADEOFFS AND DECISIONS (CONT.)

- If there are two reasonable options, how should I think through the decision?
- Based on my age, health, responsibilities, and what matters to me, what tradeoffs should I consider most carefully?
- Based on what you know about me, what would you want me to understand most before deciding?

4. DAILY LIFE, SIDE EFFECTS & SUPPORT

Understand the practical impact and get help lined up.

- How might treatment affect my energy, mood, appetite, sleep, focus, or daily activities?
- What side effects should I expect, and what is the plan to prevent or manage them from day one? Which ones should I call about right away?
- Are there ways to prevent or reduce side effects?
- What support services (nutritionist, counselor, physical therapist, palliative care) can we start now?
- What can I do to stay as strong as possible during treatment (exercise, diet, support groups)?
- If I have new symptoms or pain, who do I call and what number should I use after hours?
- Are there financial, transportation, or insurance resources I should know about?
- How can my caregiver or family be involved in the best way?

5. NEXT STEPS

End every visit knowing exactly what comes next.

- What happens next, and when?
- What tests, treatments, or appointments should I expect?
- What decisions do I need to make before the next visit?
- What symptoms or changes should prompt me to call right away?
- What concerns do patients often have at this point that I may not be thinking to ask?
- Before I leave, can we review the plan in a simple way?

5A. ALWAYS CLOSE WITH THESE THREE QUESTIONS:

- What are the three most important things I need to do before our next visit?
- How will we stay in touch if I have questions between visits?
- Is there anything I haven't asked that you think I should know?

The next page offers additional questions to consider.

Additional Questions

Questions for Follow-Up Appointments

- Since my last visit, what changes have you seen?
- Is the treatment working the way you hoped?
- Has anything shifted in what you recommend?
- What should we keep watching closely?
- Based on how I'm doing, is there anything we should adjust?

Questions That Build Hope & Perspective

Use these when you want reassurance and focus:

- What gives you reason for hope in my situation?
- What can we focus on right now, rather than trying to solve everything at once?
- What part of this plan is most important to start with?
- What support tends to help patients most during this stage?

Partnership Questions (to feel more collaborative):

- What can I do to be an active partner in my care?
- How can I share what matters most to me so it's reflected in the plan?
- If I'm feeling uncertain, is it okay to take time to think or get a second opinion?
- Can we talk about how this plan fits with my goals and quality of life?

****Quick Tips to Feel Empowered****

- **If you feel rushed:** "I know time is limited. Could we focus on my top three questions first?"
- **If something is unclear:** "Can you explain that as if I'm your family member with no medical background?"
- **You never have to decide immediately:** "This is a lot. I'd like a day or two to think and talk with my family. Can we set up a quick follow-up call?"
- **Bring a small "hope anchor"** (photo, quote, or object) to glance at if you feel overwhelmed.

You are not alone.

Patients who use these questions regularly say: "I finally felt like part of the team instead of just receiving orders." This shift makes a real difference.

*This guide is yours—customize it, share it with your caregiver, and bring one to every appointment.
Your voice matters. Your questions matter. Your life matters.*

You've got this.