

# After A Multiple Myeloma Diagnosis: Questions To Ask Your Doctor

**A diagnosis of multiple myeloma can be overwhelming. This fact sheet will tell you:**

- How to prepare for your appointments
- How stem cell transplants work
- What questions will help you learn more about your diagnosis



## The Importance of Communicating With Your Health Care Team

Your team of doctors, nurses and social workers are there to help. Here are some tips for your appointments.

- **Bring a list of questions.** This will help you remember important things to ask. Write down or record the responses so that you do not forget them.
- **Consider bringing a loved one with you.** A friend or a family member can help ask questions and provide emotional support.
- **Ask questions about costs.** Knowing how much your treatment and medications might cost can help you plan ahead and focus more attention on getting better.

If your doctors and nurses do not know every answer, they may be able to guide you to those who do.



## What Is a Stem Cell Transplant?

A stem cell transplant is when diseased bone marrow is killed by way of chemotherapy, followed by the addition of healthy stem cells.

When a person receives their own stem cells, the procedure is called an “autologous” stem cell transplant. When they receive stem cells from a donor (often a close relative), the procedure is known as an “allogeneic” stem cell transplant.



## Questions That You May Want to Ask Your Health Care Team

The following questions should help you learn key information about your diagnosis and situation.

“What stage is my multiple myeloma?”

A cancer’s stage means its size and how much it has spread in the body. The higher the number (I, II, or III), the more larger the amount of myeloma in the body.

“What are my treatment options?”

There are many kinds of treatments for multiple myeloma. These can include surgery, radiation, targeted treatment and chemotherapy.

“Is there a clinical trial available to me?”

Clinical trials test new approaches based on known and effective treatments for cancer. Doctors often urge people to take part in clinical trials if they are available.

“Is surgery an option for me?”

If surgery is an option, your health care team can help you get ready. They should be able to explain what the surgery does, what recovery is like and what the effects may be.

“How can I cope with my emotions?”

In addition to loved ones, you can find help in places of worship, support groups and counseling. Activities such as meditation and relaxation exercises can also help.

### CancerCare® Can Help

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