After A Brain Cancer Diagnosis: Questions To Ask Your Doctor

A diagnosis of brain cancer can be overwhelming. This fact sheet will tell you:

• How to prepare for your appointments
• How cognitive therapy might help
• 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.

Does Cognitive Therapy Have Any Benefits?

Cognitive therapy can help patients cope with challenges related to attention, memory and information processing.

Cognitive therapy can include teaching strategies about daily activities or breaking tasks into steps to help achieve them. Report any changes in mental health to your health care team right away.
The main type of brain cancer is glioblastoma, but there are types that are not as common.

A tumor's stage means its size and how much it has spread in the body. The higher the number (I, II, III or IV), the more it has spread.

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

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.

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.

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.

Questions That You May Want to Ask Your Health Care Team

“What type of brain cancer do I have?”
“What stage is my brain cancer?”
“What are my treatment options?”
“Is there a clinical trial available to me?”
“Is surgery an option for me?”
“How can I cope with my emotions?”

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