

# After An Early Bladder Cancer Diagnosis: Questions To Ask Your Doctor

**A diagnosis of early bladder cancer can be overwhelming. This fact sheet will tell you:**

- How to prepare for your appointments
- What the impact of your diet may have on your cancer
- What questions will help you learn more about your diagnosis
- What impacts on fertility and urination might be



## 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.



## How Does What I Eat Affect My Cancer?

Healthy diets are often recommended for people with bladder cancer. Your doctor can help direct you to better nutrition. They can also help give correct information about eating. For example, eating sugar does not cause bladder cancer to grow. Treatment can sometimes affect your sense of taste or give you diarrhea. Flavors such as lemon or lime can help the taste, and more fiber can firm your waste product.



## 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 is early stage bladder cancer?”

Bladder cancer is considered in an early stage when the cancer cells are on the surface of the bladder lining or have gone into the connective tissue below the bladder lining. It has not gone into the muscle layer.

“What stage is my bladder cancer?”

Early stage bladder cancer means that it is Stage 0 or Stage I. The cancer can advance to Stage IV if it is not treated.

“What are my treatment options?”

There are many kinds of treatments for bladder cancer. These can include surgery, radiation, targeted treatment and chemotherapy, which your doctor can discuss with you.



## Impacts on Fertility and Urination

Bladder cancer and its treatment can have an effect on fertility. This is an important issue for many people. Your doctor can help with any questions about the effects on your fertility.

Bladder cancer can also affect your feelings as you urinate, such as giving you a burning sensation. You may need to urinate more often, or when your bladder is not full.

### CancerCare® Can Help

Founded in 1944, CancerCare is the leading national organization providing free support services and information to help people manage the emotional, practical and financial challenges of cancer. Our comprehensive services include resource navigation, counseling and support groups over the phone, online and in-person, educational workshops, publications and financial and co-payment assistance. All CancerCare services are provided by master's-prepared oncology social workers and world-leading cancer experts.

To learn more, visit [www.cancercare.org](http://www.cancercare.org) or call **800-813-HOPE (4673)**.

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