

Questions to Ask Your Doctor about Hodgkin's Disease

Patient Information about Hodgkin's Disease

<http://www.oncologychannel.com/patient-information-hodgkins-disease/index.shtml>

Hodgkin's disease, also called Hodgkin's lymphoma, is a type of cancer that usually originates in the lymph nodes. In Hodgkin's disease, infection- and disease-fighting cells in the lymphatic system undergo abnormal changes. These abnormal cells, which are called Reed-Sternberg cells, multiply and form tumors and can spread throughout the body. Common symptoms of Hodgkin's include painless swelling of the lymph nodes, enlarged spleen, night sweats, severe itching, and unexplained fever, fatigue, and weight loss.

Many times, the goal of Hodgkin's treatment is cure of the disease. It is important for patients with Hodgkin's disease to work closely with their oncology health care team (e.g., medical oncologist, hematologist, radiation oncologist, oncology nurse, licensed dietician) to develop a successful treatment plan.

Here are some questions to ask your doctor about Hodgkin's lymphoma. **Print this page**, check off the questions you would like your doctor to answer, and take it with you to your appointment. Asking the right questions can make it easier for patients with Hodgkin's lymphoma to make important treatment decisions.

Questions to Ask Your Doctor about Hodgkin's Disease

- What is Hodgkin's disease?
- Why do you suspect that I have Hodgkin's?
- What types of diagnostic tests will be performed to determine if I have Hodgkin's lymphoma, and if so, to determine the stage and grade of the disease?
- What kind of biopsy will be performed? What does this procedure involve?
- What are the possible benefits, risks, and complications associated with biopsy and other diagnostic procedures?
- How should I prepare for these tests?
- Will someone contact me or should I call for my test results?

Telephone number to call:

Date to call:

- Who will explain the results of my biopsy to me?

- What is the classification (e.g., type, stage, and grade) of my Hodgkin's lymphoma?
- What is the usual prognosis for patients with this disease?
- Should I get a second medical opinion before starting treatment? Why or why not?

Questions to Ask Your Doctor about Treatment for Hodgkin's Disease

- What type of treatment(s) do you recommend? Why do you recommend this Hodgkin's treatment?
- What are the potential benefits, risks, side effects, and complications of this treatment?
- Is there anything I can do to help prepare myself for treatment? Are there steps I can take to make my course of treatment easier and/or more effective?
- Will my health insurance cover my treatment and any associated medical expenses?
- How will the recommended treatment(s) be administered?
- How often will I receive treatments and how long will each treatment take?
- If I will be receiving medications to treat my Hodgkin's, what specific drugs will be used?
- What side effects might I experience from these medications? What can I do to help reduce these side effects?
- What should I do if my condition worsens or I experience severe side effects or serious complications during my treatment for Hodgkin's lymphoma? **Telephone number to call:**
- How should I expect to feel before, during, and after my Hodgkin's lymphoma treatment?
- Will I be able to continue my normal activities during treatment? If not, when can I return to work and other daily activities? **Restrictions:**
- What kind of special care might I need before, during, and after my Hodgkin's treatment?

- If this treatment is unsuccessful, what other therapies are available to treat Hodgkin's? Might my treatment involve chemotherapy, radiation therapy, stem cell therapy, or a combination of these therapies?
- How will you know if my treatment is working? What signs indicate that my disease is in remission?
- Do you recommend that I participate in a clinical trial for patients who have Hodgkin's disease? Why or why not?
- Are there any experimental treatments for Hodgkin's lymphoma? Might I benefit from these treatments?
- Can you recommend a local or online support group for Hodgkin's patients, family members, and caregivers?
- Next appointment: Doctor:** _____ **Date:** _____ **Time:** _____

Notes/Additional Information