

ORAL, HEAD AND NECK CANCER: QUESTIONS TO ASK THE DOCTOR

Head and neck cancer is a term used to describe a number of different malignant tumors that develop in or around the throat, larynx, nose, sinuses, and mouth. If you are newly diagnosed, it is important to ask your doctor questions to help you better understand your diagnosis, treatment plan, and overall care.

AFTER GETTING A DIAGNOSIS

- What type of cancer do I have?
- Where is the tumor located?
- What stage is the cancer? What does this mean?
- Why is it important to know whether the cancer was caused by HPV?
- Should I get an additional consultation or second opinion?

CHOOSING A TREATMENT & MANAGING SIDE EFFECTS

- What are my treatment options?
- What clinical trials are open to me? Where can I learn more about them?
- What plan do you recommend? Why?
- What is the goal of each treatment?
- What are the short- and long-term side effects?
- Can you recommend a dentist with experience with patients receiving head and neck radiation?

- Should I see a speech pathologist prior to treatment?
- Will I be able to continue with activities of daily life?
- Are there any support services available to me and my family?
- Who should I call with questions or problems?

HAVING SURGERY

- Is it necessary? Are there other alternatives?
- Will any lymph nodes need to be removed? If so, what type of neck dissection will be done? What does this mean?
- What will my recovery be like?
- Will it affect my speech or ability to chew and swallow?
- Will this affect my appearance?
- Will I need to have reconstructive surgery?

RADIATION THERAPY, CHEMOTHERAPY, OR TARGETED THERAPY

- How will this treatment be given?
- Where will the treatment be performed?
- How long will I need to continue treatment?

PLANNING FOLLOW-UP CARE

- Will I need rehabilitation therapy?
- What is the risk of the cancer returning? Are there signs and symptoms I should watch for?
- What follow-up tests will I need, and how often will I need them?
- How do I get a treatment summary and survivorship care plan to keep in my personal records?
- Who will be coordinating my follow-up care?
- What survivorship support services are available to me and my family?

Visit www.headandneck.org for more information.

Information, in part, courtesy of Cancer.net.



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