



# Breast Cancer Questions To Ask

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Questions to Ask Your Medical Oncologist

- What type of breast cancer do I have?
- What is the size of the tumor?
- What is the grade and stage of this disease? What does this mean?
- Do I need more tests to find out if there is cancer anywhere else in my body?
- What is my chance of recovery (prognosis)?
- What are my options for treatment?
- What is chemotherapy?
- What is hormonal (endocrine) therapy?
- What is biological therapy?
- What is targeted therapy?
- How will each treatment option benefit me?
- What are the risks of the treatment options?
- What is the expected timeline for each treatment option?
- Should I get a second opinion?
- Are there any research studies that test new treatments (clinical trials) in which I can participate?
- Has the cancer spread to my lymph nodes or anywhere else in my body?
- What can I do to get ready for this treatment?
- What are the potential side effects of this treatment?
- What can I do to ease side effects?
- How will this treatment affect my daily life? Will I be able to work, exercise and perform my usual activities?
- What lifestyle changes should I consider making during my treatment?
- Will I lose my hair?
- How does having reached (or not reached) menopause affect my treatment options?
- Should I consider my family's history of breast cancer in making my decision about treatment?
- Who can I call if I have a problem or question about my treatment?
- Who can I contact for supportive and emotional help for me? For my family?

## Questions to Ask the Surgeon

- Are you board-certified?
- Do you specialize in this type of surgery?
- How many operations like the one I am considering have you performed?
- Could I have surgery that conserves my breast (lumpectomy)?
- Do I need a mastectomy? If so, would you recommend an immediate breast reconstruction

(plastic surgery)?

- Should I consider chemotherapy before surgery?
- When do I need to make a decision about surgery?
- What should I do to get ready for the operation?
- Do you have recommendations on how to relax before surgery?
- What medications and supplements should I stop taking?
- What type of anesthesia will I need for this surgery?
- Where will the scar be, and what will it look like?
- What are the potential risks and side effects of this surgery?
- What can I do to ease side effects following surgery?
- What can I expect after the surgery?
- Will I need to be admitted into a hospital for this surgery? If so, how long will I stay in the hospital?
- How long do I have to wait for my laboratory test results? How will I get the test results?
- Will a pathologist examine the tissue and write a report? Who will explain that report to me?
- What are the possible complications for this type of surgery? How would I know if there is a problem?
- How long will it take for me to recover after the surgery?
- Will I have stitches, staples and/or bandages?
- Will there be permanent effects from the surgery?
- Are there instructions or post-operative care pamphlets I can take home with me after my surgery?
- When can I shower or bathe after surgery?
- Will I need to have surgical drains? What does this mean?
- When will I need to return for a follow-up appointment?

### **After Your Surgery**

- Can I get a copy of my pathology report? Who will explain the results to me?
- Was all of the cancer removed during the surgery?
- Do I need additional surgery?
- Do I need other treatment, such as chemotherapy or radiation therapy?

### **After Your Treatment**

- After my treatment has ended, what will my follow-up care plan be?
- How often will I need to see a doctor?
- What tests will I need?
- How often will I need those tests?