

Questions About Your Treatment

When you decide to pursue or continue treatments when your illness is advanced, you will want to ask questions about the benefits you are likely to gain from your treatment options. The American Cancer Society (www.cancer.org) has published suggestions for questions that you or your family should ask your doctor before pursuing treatment for cancer, which may be used to explore treatment options for other serious illnesses as well.

- What are my treatment choices?
- Which treatment do you recommend, and why? Do I have other options?
- What is the purpose of the treatment: to cure the disease, to help me to live longer, or to relieve or prevent symptoms of the cancer?
- What side effects are likely to result from the treatment? What can I do to help reduce these side effects?
- Will I be in pain? How much? Can I handle the pain?
- Are you able to offer me the treatments I want?
- What are the chances that the treatment will be helpful? What are the risks associated with it? Will I have any control over what happens to me?
- What if I feel that I can no longer tolerate the treatment?
- Would a second opinion be helpful? Where can I get a second opinion before I start treatment?