



Questions to Ask Your Doctor

You may want to ask your doctor the following questions before having a biopsy:

- What kind of biopsy will I have? Why?
- How long will it take?
- Will I be awake?
- Will I have much pain?
- Will I have anesthesia?
- What kind?
- Are there any risks?
- What are the chances of infection or bleeding after the biopsy?
- How soon will I know the results?
- If I do have cancer, who will talk with me about the next steps? When?



You may want to ask your doctor these questions before having surgery:

- What options for surgery do I have?
- Is breast-sparing surgery an option for me?
- Which operation do you recommend for me?
- Why?
- Will my lymph nodes be removed?
- How many?
- Why?
- How will I feel after the operation?
- Will I have to stay in the hospital?
- Will I need to learn how to take care of myself or my incision when I get home?



- Where will the scars be?
- What will they look like?
- If I decide to have plastic surgery to rebuild my breast, how and when can that be done?
- Can you suggest a plastic surgeon for me to contact?
- Will I have to do special exercises to help regain motion and strength in my arm and shoulder?
- Will a physical therapist or nurse show me how to do the exercises?



You may want to ask your doctor these questions after your surgery:

- What did the hormone receptor test show?
- Did I have an Oncotype test, if so, what was my score and what does it mean?
- Do any lymph nodes show signs of cancer?
- What is the stage of the disease?
- Has the cancer spread?
- What is the goal of treatment?
- What are my treatment choices?
- Which do you recommend for me?
- Why?
- What are the expected benefits of each kind of treatment?
- What are the risks and possible side effects of each treatment?



- How can side effects be managed?
- What can I do to prepare for treatment?
- How will treatment affect my normal activities?
- Would a clinical trial be appropriate for me?



You may want to ask your doctor these questions before having radiation therapy:

- How will radiation be given?
- Will I have Whole Breast or Partial Breast Radiation?
- When will treatment start?
- When will it end?
- How often will I have treatments?
- How will I feel during treatment?
- Will I be able to drive myself to and from treatment?
- How will we know the treatment is working?
- What can I do to take care of myself before, during, and after treatment?
- Will treatment affect my skin?



- How will my chest look afterward?
- Are there any long-term effects?
- How often will I need checkups?



You may want to ask your doctor these questions before having chemotherapy, hormone therapy, or biological therapy:

- What drugs will I be taking?
- What will they do?
- If I am Er+ Pr+ and I need hormone treatment what drugs do you recommend?
- When will treatment start?
- When will it end?
- How often will I have treatments?
- Where will I go for treatment? Will I be able to drive home afterward?
- What can I do to take care of myself during treatment?
- How will we know the treatment is working?
- Which side effects should I expect?
- Will there be long-term effects?



You may want to ask your doctor these questions about breast reconstruction:

- Which type of surgery would give me the best results?
- How will I look afterward?
- When can my reconstruction begin?
- How many surgeries will I need?
- What are the risks at the time of surgery? Later?
- Will I have scars? Where? What will they look like?
- If tissue from another part of my body is used, will there be any permanent changes where the tissue was removed?
- What activities should I avoid?
- When can I return to my normal activities?