

Questions to ask your Health Care Team

Having open communication with your health care team is important in making informed decisions. The following questions are meant to generate meaningful discussions, and some topics may not relate to your diagnosis. Feel free to bring this list of questions with you to your appointments, and include your own questions as well. Please keep in mind that one or more appointments may be necessary to thoroughly discuss the subject matter below.

General Questions

- What is the name of the brain tumour I have been diagnosed with?
- What is the grade of the tumour? What does this mean?
- Can you explain the pathology report (i.e. laboratory test results) to me?
- Who will be part of my health care team? What does each member do?
- Where and how can I access a second opinion, if needed?
- Are there currently any clinical trials for this type of brain tumour?

It is not uncommon to feel nervous or only hear part of what is said at a doctor's appointment. It can be beneficial to ask a family member or friend to attend appointments with you so that they can take notes.

Treatment

- What are my treatment options? What treatment plan would you recommend and why?
- What are the possible side-effects of each treatment option, both short-term and long-term?
- How could each of these treatment options impact my quality of life and daily activities?
- How long will treatment take to complete?

Surgery

- What type of surgery do you recommend?
- How long will the surgery take?
- What is the average recovery time for this surgery, and what might recovery look like for me?
- What are the possible long-term side-effects of having this surgery, and what can be done to relieve them?
- What are the benefits of having my tumour tissue preserved for additional tests and / or clinical trials?

Radiation Therapy

- What type of radiation treatment do you recommend?
- What is the goal of this treatment and how long will it take?
- What side-effects can I expect during and after treatment, and who should I contact if I am concerned?
- What are the possible long-term side-effects of this treatment, and what can be done to relieve them?

Planning Follow-up Care

- Who will be leading my follow-up care? How can I contact them if I have questions or concerns?
- What follow-up tests will be required after treatment, and how often?
- What support services and programs are available to me and to those providing my care?
- What are the chances that the tumour will recur? What signs or symptoms should I watch for?
- How do I get a treatment summary and survivorship care plan for my personal records?

