



Your First Oncologist Appointment

The first oncologist appointment can be one of the more stressful events in your life. Fortunately, as with so many other things, being prepared can really help.

It is very important to have a supportive person, a personal advocate, with you at this and any future appointment. There will be so much information thrown at you, words you do not understand and pressure to act quickly. It truly helps to have the reassurance of someone who is on your side, not only to help prevent you from feeling like you're being ganged up on but to also help moderate the conversation and remember what was said.

If you have not yet had a biopsy, please read my document on [Biopsies](#), before your appointment. Biopsies are certainly not without risk and the potential for spreading any cancer cells is very real. While a biopsy is currently the only way to learn exactly what the receptor types are if you have a cancerous tumor, it is not necessary to determine with a reasonable degree of certainty whether or not you have cancer. Cancer can be identified with a combination of ultrasounds and thermography scans.

I'd also recommend that you please read the following documents: [Cancer an Introduction](#), plus [Chemo](#), [Surgery](#) and [Radiation](#). All of that information will help you be better prepared to understand the options which will be discussed at your appointment.

With rare exception, these appointments are usually the same. You will be told the diagnosis, a physical exam of the breast might be done, you will be told the protocols they recommend and the life expectancy if those protocols are followed, including your life expectancy if you don't do them, and they will immediately want to schedule your next appointment to get those protocols implemented. Doctors expect compliance. If you do not agree to that next appointment, you will probably be warned of the risks you are taking by any delay in 'treatment'.

Since the current "standard of care" is chemo, surgery, radiation and drugs, you can very-well expect that those, or any combination thereof, will be recommended. With that being the current standard of care, and in many places is required by law, it will be prescribed even if it isn't the best option for you. Most doctors don't know anything about natural healing and will react negatively if you try and discuss it with them. Listen to what they have to say. Bring a notebook with you and take notes!

Please don't hesitate to ask them to repeat or explain their answers if there is anything you don't understand.

In addition to asking for a copy of the actual pathology report, if you already had a biopsy, be sure and also ask for the patient information literature on any chemo or drugs or anything else they recommend. You are entitled to that information and will need those in order to understand them.

It is helpful to write down the specific questions you want to ask before your appointment, as it is so easy to forget at least half of what you wanted to ask once your mind starts spinning from all the information being thrown at you.

Some of the questions I find helpful are:

1. What type of cancer do I have and what does that mean to me?
2. Is it fast or slow growing?
3. What protocols do you recommend?
4. Why are you recommending these specific protocols for my cancer?
5. What are the risks and side-effects with these protocols?
6. Do you have printouts I may take home with me regarding these protocols? (For each chemo type, surgery, radiation and any drugs.)
7. How will these recommended protocols impact my immune system?
8. What is the success rate with these protocols?
9. Do you have any documentation you can share showing these success rates, such as peer reviewed published medical literature?
10. How many people have you successfully treated with this protocol?
11. How many of them/what percentage are alive after 5 years, 10 years, more?
12. How many of them have experienced recurrence?
13. What knowledge do you have of the cancer healing properties of diet and lifestyle changes?
14. What alternative protocols are available for me?
15. What is my prognosis if I do nothing?
16. If I decide to try alternative protocols first, would you still monitor me with the blood tests and scans I need?

If the doctor recommends chemo,

17. Ask if he/she is aware that a 2003 study published in the Journal of Clinical Oncology found that chemo was ineffective in 97% of the treatments of adult onset cancer? <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/15630849/>
18. If so, why are you still recommending chemo for me?
19. Will this chemo kill off the cancer stem cells?
20. Does this chemo cause secondary cancers?
21. Will you be running any chemo-sensitivity tests firsts to determine if my cancer will respond to these specific ones, or to make sure I'm not allergic to them?

Of course, you may have other questions which come to mind. Please do not hesitate to ask them.

When the appointment is wrapping up, my next suggestion is to thank the doctor for his/her time and the information they have provided you. Let them know that you now want to go home and review the literature they

have provided, to take some time to better understand what you learned that day and be able to make an informed decision. You can let the doctor know that you will contact them when you are ready to schedule the next appointment.

To me, that step is very important for several reasons. First, there is a very good chance your head will be spinning with all the information and statistics which have just been thrown at you. You'll need time to digest it all and no one should ever be forced to make a decision under pressure.

Equally as important, you have not alienated the doctor, in case you decide later on that you might need their assistance. You have validated the doctor's sense of worth by letting them know you valued the information they shared and you have not rejected them outright.

Of course, once you're back home and have had a chance to digest some of what you've learned, please do your research ... both with the documents provided here in HBCN and with other resources on the internet ... so you may better understand your options. If you feel you need more answers to your questions, don't hesitate to reach back out to the doctor's office for clarification. You may also want consider the [coaching](#) offered here in HBCN where you may ask questions without being made to feel like you just grew a third eye! We will do our best to help you sort through it all.