



Questions for your GP

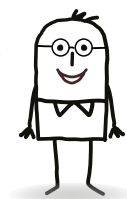
Doctors, nurses, your consultant and the rest of your medical team are there to help you beat bladder cancer, but let's face it, they often talk in their own technical language and assume that we all understand what they are saying to us!

It is also important to remember that every patient and carer is different. Some of us want to know absolutely everything, and some of us just want our doctors to do whatever they have to, but we don't want to hear any of the details.

Our advice would be to ask as many questions as **YOU** want to. Make sure you understand what you are being told, and if you need to, ask your GP to explain it again. Your doctor will be very happy to explain everything about your diagnosis and treatment. But you do need to tell them what you want to know.

So, what are the best questions to ask?

This will very much depend on where you are with your treatment and who you are sitting in front of. Let's start from the very beginning...



Our recommended questions for your GP ...

- **What do you think my symptoms mean?**

Do make sure that you tell your GP all your symptoms, write them down before you go and see them.

- **I'm worried that it is bladder cancer, could it be?**

Be ready to explain why you think that you might have bladder cancer, again write this down before you go to see your GP if you think this might be the case.

- **What if it is not just a UTI?**

GPs are busy people and for the vast majority of people that they see, the symptoms are most likely to just be a UTI. If you get UTIs often, remember to tell your GP this as it is a known symptom of bladder cancer. You know your own body, if you are not happy with just being treated for a UTI do say so.

- **Can I be checked for bladder cancer just in case?**

Be firm on this if you feel that you need to. Look the GP straight in the eye and ask them if they can prove that it is just a UTI.

- **How quickly will I be seen?**

Ask the GP if they are referring you as "urgent" or "non-urgent"?
If your GP feels you need urgent attention, you should get your first hospital appointment within 2 weeks.

- **Are you referring me as "urgent" or "non-urgent"?**

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- **What tests will I have?**

The GP should be able to explain what tests you will be having, where you will have to go for them, how you need to prepare for the tests and how long you will have to wait for the results. Remember that you should experience minimum discomfort during tests and receive good information and support. Your tests should be organised at a time to suit you. Many clinics can see you in the evening or at weekends.

- **Who will give me the test results, and when?**

You need to find out how you will get to know the test results, who will tell you, how long you will have to wait for a confirmed diagnosis.

- **Can I come and talk to you about the results?**

It is always best to sit down and talk to your GP about the diagnosis you have been given. Even if you feel that the team at the hospital have done a great job in explaining your diagnosis and what is going to happen next, having a talk with your GP will help to ensure that they feel part of your team as you have your treatments and checkups.

Recommended questions for your GP (continued)

- **Can I bring someone with me to discuss my diagnosis and treatment?**

You should feel free to bring someone with you when your diagnosis and treatment options are being discussed. In fact this is always recommended.

- **Can you explain about the specialist nurses? (CNSs)**

Your GP and your CNS (clinical nurse specialist) are your contact points if you are worried about anything concerning your diagnosis, treatments, tests, your results or your aftercare.

- **Who can I telephone when I think of questions later?**

Having treatment for bladder cancer can be worrying so do establish in the mind of your GP that you might need their help at different times. Your GP should know more about your overall health than anyone else so do establish this link.

- **Will I get a Care Plan and will they send you a copy?**

You should get a detailed Care Plan from the hospital once they have decided on what is the best treatment for you. It is important that your GP gets a copy to so that they know what is happening to you.

Having a diagnosis for bladder cancer can make you feel that you are on a rollercoaster of tests, treatments and waiting for results. Do remember that your GP and the team at your local surgery are there for you all the time.

They will help explain things and help you deal with any side effects – emotional and physical.

Worried about any part of your treatment? Talk to your GP.



We provide information packs for GPs to help them support bladder cancer patients, so make sure that your GP knows about Fight Bladder Cancer and how we can help them help you.



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CANCER

Reg. charity 1157763



ABOUT FIGHT BLADDER CANCER

Fight Bladder Cancer is a patient-led charity in the UK that exists to:

- **support anyone affected by bladder cancer**
- **raise awareness** of the disease in order to improve early diagnosis
- **campaign for and support research** into this disease
- **affect policy** at the highest level to bring about change

Fight Bladder Cancer has a worldwide reputation and is supported by top international healthcare professionals.

At Fight Bladder Cancer, we take great care to provide up-to-date, unbiased and accurate facts about bladder cancer.

We have a very supportive medical advice panel made up of some of the best professionals working with bladder cancer, and hope that our information will add to the medical advice you have had and help you to make decisions.

REMEMBER, YOU CAN CONTACT US AT ANY TIME FOR SUPPORT

or to engage with us in fighting bladder cancer

via our website at

fightbladdercancer.co.uk

via our online forum at

facebook.com/groups/bladdercanceruk/

by email at info@fightbladdercancer.co.uk

by phone on **01844 351621**

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