

Making decisions about treatment

How do I decide on a treatment?

Your doctor will recommend one or more cancer treatments after looking at your test results. Ask your doctor about the different treatments and side effects. Think about how the side effects may affect you.

Before deciding on treatment, you can talk to your doctor, family and friends. You might want to talk to other people in your community. Some people join a local support group to hear other people's experiences of cancer.

If you need to talk to other people before you make a decision, let your doctor know and ask how long you can think about it.

Do I have to have treatment?

You can say yes or no to any treatment.

The earlier you have treatment, the higher your chance of getting better.

Some people choose treatment to try to cure the cancer, other people have treatment that makes them feel as well as possible. Some people don't have treatment at all.

Can I try a new type of treatment?

You might be able to be part of a clinical trial, which is a study that tests new treatments. Clinical trials aren't always available – ask your doctor for more information.

If you are in a clinical trial, you will have the best current treatment or a new treatment.



Your doctor helps you decide on treatment

Can I see another doctor?

Yes, talking to another doctor is called getting a second opinion. Some people are scared to do this, but doctors are used to it.

The second doctor will look at your test results and suggest a treatment. They might say the same thing as your first doctor. You can switch doctors if you want, or you can go back to your first doctor.

Do I have to pay?

Your doctors must tell you if you have to pay for treatment.

- ◎ If you have treatment in a public hospital, it will be free.
- ◎ If you have treatment in a private hospital, your health insurance will cover some or all of the costs. You have to pay for what's not covered.
- ◎ Talk to your hospital social worker to find out what other costs there might be, such as travel costs and seeing a specialist, and if you can get any help with these.

More information

◎ **Cancer Council Helpline**

13 11 20

www.cancerCouncil.com.au

◎ **Your local Aboriginal health service**