

Follow these helpful tips to prepare for your doctor's appointment and get the most out of each visit.

1 Preparing for your Appointment

Plan to arrive 15 minutes early and bring something to keep yourself occupied while you wait. The following are essential documents and information your doctor's office may ask for:



- Picture ID
- Health insurance card (if you have one) and your referral (if required by your insurance)
- Summary of your medical history, including recent reports from your doctors and any supporting documents (for example: biopsy and pathology reports, scans and imaging results, x-rays, etc.)
- Bring a detailed list of medications you take, including prescriptions and over-the-counter pain relievers, vitamins, herbs, and supplements. List dosage, frequency taken, prescribing physician.

2 Making the Most of Each Appointment

Leading up to your appointment, be sure to keep a list of any questions you would like to ask your doctor. Ideally, bring a family member or trusted friend with you so that person can take comprehensive notes. If you go alone, you will need to take the notes. Make sure to review the answers you've received with the doctor(s) to ensure you understand them before you leave the appointment.



Follow these tips to help make it easier to remember what your doctors say:

- Don't be afraid to ask questions if you don't understand something your doctor says
 - » Ask for an explanation of unfamiliar terms and definitions
- Let your doctor know the most helpful way to receive information
- Ask for visual aids, if needed, during your discussion
- Ask for any printed information to take home with you

3 Questions You May Want to Ask

About Your Cancer

- What kind of thyroid cancer do I have?
 - » Can it be cured? Controlled?
- What is the stage of my thyroid cancer and how does this impact my prognosis?
- Is there a genetic link to this type of cancer? Should my family members get tested?
- Where can I go to find out more information?



About Biomarker Testing

- What is biomarker testing?
 - » Are there different methods?
 - » Which option is right for me?
- How are biomarker tests done?
- What makes biomarker testing important for my type of cancer?
- Why is it important to test for all treatable biomarkers?
 - » What biomarkers are most frequently associated with my type of cancer?
- When should biomarker testing be done?

About Treatments

- Are there any other diagnostic tests I need to do before we can begin treatment?
- What are my treatment options?
 - » Why are you recommending this specific treatment for me? For my type of cancer?
What are the advantages and disadvantages of the treatment(s) recommended?
 - » Where can I receive treatment?
 - » What is the specific goal of this type of treatment?
 - » Should I get a second opinion before I begin treatment?
 - » Do I need to consider a clinical trial?
- What are possible short and long-term side effects of surgery? Any suggestions for coping with these side effects when/if they occur?
- What are possible short and long-term side effects of radioactive iodine (RAI)? Any suggestions for coping with these side effects when/if they occur?
- What are possible short and long-term side effects of different advanced treatments? Any suggestions for coping with these side effects when/if they occur?
- Will the treatment have an impact on my day-to-day life?
- How will I know if the treatment is working?
- What lifestyle changes might help me before, during or after treatment?
- Will my treatment ever end?
- What will my long-term follow-up care be like?
- What does thyroid hormone replacement therapy involve?

Remember that answers may change over time based on changes to your medical situation and ongoing research advancements. For more questions to ask during your appointments, visit: www.thyca.org

4 After the Appointment

Be sure to follow instructions and fill any prescriptions you were given by your doctors. It may be helpful to start a file of all your important documents including your medication information, test results, and appointment notes. Have your list of ongoing questions handy so you can add to it in between appointments and discuss with your doctor at your next visit. There are many resources available online to help organize this information.



5 Learn More

Visit Lilly/ThyCa landing page: <http://bit.ly/StoriesofStrength> or ThyCa: Thyroid Cancer Survivors' Association, Inc. website: www.thyca.org for additional educational resources and to see what support may be available.

