Questions to ask your doctor about systemic therapy



This discussion guide is intended for those living with **advanced (metastatic) kidney cancer** and can be used to support conversations with your doctor and/or medical team when making decisions about **systemic therapy** to treat your cancer. Systemic therapy refers to any type of cancer treatment that targets the entire body.



Download this guide and bring it to appointments with your medical oncologist, including your first one or any follow-up appointments with your medical team. Many of these topics will be covered by your doctor, but if not, this guide can help you understand more about the options available to you and arm you with the questions you need to make an informed, joint decision with your doctor and/or medical team.

About Systemic Therapy

or a combination of these. Some systemic therapies can be taken in tablet form at home, while others are given intravenously (entering through a vein) at a cancer centre or infusion clinic. The below questions can be helpful as you learn more about your medical team and your treatment options. What is the role Who else makes up my What does the type / medical team? Who is my of my medical subtype, and stage of oncologist and/or main point of contact for my kidney cancer mean questions / concerns? radiation oncologist? for my treatment plan? Why is systemic therapy What are the recommended for me? differences between How is it different than targeted therapies and immunotherapies? chemotherapy?

For advanced kidney cancer, systemic therapy options include targeted therapy, immunotherapy,

Understanding Treatment Options

Whether you're starting or continuing a systemic therapy, there are important questions to ask that can determine your treatment path depending on where you live in Canada, your health insurance coverage, and the current recommended guidelines for approved treatments.

The below questions can prompt discussion about the treatment path your doctor is recommending and why it's the best option for you at this point in your care.

What treatments are
available/covered by
my provincial health
insurance and how do
get access? Will I have
to pay for the drug?

What does first line, second line, third line

treatment mean?

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What happens if my current treatment fails? What are

my other options?

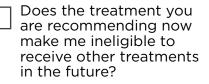
What treatment is the best

option for me, and why?

quality of life, more time,

Will it give me a better

shrink my tumour, etc.?





About Your Treatment

It's important to communicate with your medical team and tell them everything you are experiencing. There are things they can do to adjust dosing/dosing schedules or manage potential side effects. The questions below will prompt discussion, to ensure you have the best experience possible. What are the potential What should I look out for How can I prepare for treatment? Are there side effects of this in terms of side effects? lifestyle changes you treatment, and how can When should I contact recommend? they be managed? my doctor? Can my dose be Can I take breaks or adjust If my dose is adjusted, adjusted and/or does it impact the the dosing schedule of my reduced if I experience treatment if I have travel effectiveness of my side effects? plans, an important event, treatment? or other commitments? **Monitoring & Follow-up** Monitoring how your cancer responds to treatment is an important part of managing the disease. It's also an opportunity for your medical team to check in on how you are doing. Your medical oncologist will typically send you for imaging every 8-12 weeks, which may include CT scans, MRIs and/or bone scans. Appointments and bloodwork with your medical team will happen more frequently. The questions below will help you navigate conversations about monitoring and progression while under the care of your medical oncologist / medical team. What does monitoring entail? How and when will we What follow-up tests Why is it important? know if my treatment and imaging will I need? is working? How often do I need them? How is 'progression' What happens next defined at this stage (is if my cancer grows there spread, growth of or progresses? existing tumours, etc.)? For more information about systemic therapies in Canada visit kidneycancercanada.ca/treatment Kidney Cancer Canada can help. **INFORMATION • SUPPORT • ADVOCACY** Visit **kidneycancercanada.ca** to access more resources and supports. Use the section below to take notes or add more questions that are personal to you. MY NOTES: