



## NEEDING ADDITIONAL TREATMENT

### Talking Through Options for the Best Care

The time may come when you need to consider different treatment options. Some of the reasons you may need additional treatment include:

- The disease relapses, meaning the cancer returns after a successful course of treatment
- The disease is refractory, meaning the cancer does not respond to treatment
- Signs of disease remain after treatment even if treatment did offer overall improvement

Many factors can affect treatment options. Some of these include the type of prior therapy, the number of previous therapies, the severity of the relapse, and overall health. Weigh your treatment options carefully and talk through each one with your healthcare team.

#### TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR HEALTHCARE TEAM

- Keep a list of your questions in a designated notebook and take it with you to appointments.
- Reach out to your healthcare team if you feel like a question cannot wait until your next appointment or a concern causes you anxiety.
- Take notes during appointments so you can think through your options at home.
- Tell your healthcare team about any new or worsening symptoms or side effects.
- Ask your caregiver or a loved one to go with you to appointments for a second set of ears.
- Get a second opinion. Find a different hematologist-oncologist who specializes in your diagnosis.
- Ask about clinical trials. Clinical trials can broaden the number of treatment options available to you. Clinical trials can be an option at any time during treatment.
- Update your healthcare team about any changes to your health insurance, contact information, medications, vitamins and/or supplements. Notify them of any complementary therapies you have received or are receiving. Tell them if you are pregnant or expect to become pregnant. Let them know if you consume alcohol, smoke or use recreational drugs.
- Do not start or stop taking any medications, vitamins or supplements without consulting your doctor.

#### PRIMARY CONTACT AT DOCTOR'S OFFICE

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email \_\_\_\_\_

#### EMERGENCY CONTACT AT DOCTOR'S OFFICE

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_

All of your questions are important. Do not feel embarrassed to ask them.  
You deserve to have your concerns addressed.

### QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR HEALTHCARE TEAM

- What signs or symptoms indicate that I need additional treatment?
- What is the goal of treatment?
- What are my treatment options?
- Am I eligible for a clinical trial? Would a clinical trial be a good choice for me?
- What are the potential side effects of each available treatment?
- Can I be referred to palliative care (or supportive care) for symptom management?
- How long do I have to make a decision about treatment?
- I had a good response to my initial treatment. Can this treatment be repeated?
- How will this treatment and my disease be monitored?
- If this treatment is unsuccessful, what are my treatment options?
- If I choose to forego treatment, what will happen?

Visit [www.LLS.org/WhatToAsk](http://www.LLS.org/WhatToAsk) for the full **Communicating With Your Healthcare Team** series and printable question guides.

### Discuss Your Treatment Goals with Your Healthcare Team

The goal of treatment for many patients is to achieve remission. However, other important goals include quality of life and future plans, and these goals may be different for each patient. Take some time to think over your goals for treatment.

It is important to create or update your advance directives. Advance directives are legal documents that outline your healthcare wishes in the event that you are unable to communicate. Every person, not just cancer patients, should have advance directives in place in case of an emergency. **Visit [www.LLS.org/booklets](http://www.LLS.org/booklets) to view *Advance Care Planning*.**

### GET ONE-ON-ONE SUPPORT

The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's **Information Specialists**, highly trained oncology social workers and nurses, can provide information and support and connect you to our **Clinical Trial Support Center** and **Registered Dietitians**.

- Call **800.955.4572** Mon.-Fri. 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. (ET)
- Visit [www.LLS.org/PatientSupport](http://www.LLS.org/PatientSupport)

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