



What to consider for an initial appointment with your oncologist

- Develop a list of questions (consider including family and close friends to come up with the list so everyone's concerns are aired)
- Appoint a health advocate for you. Someone that can speak for you if you cannot. Someone who can accompany you on all or most appointments. Someone who is not afraid to ask questions of medical staff and be your advocate when you cannot be. Make sure this person has signed the appropriate HIPAA documents at your doctor's office and hospital.
- Go over any and all of your written test results with your oncologist.
- Walk out with a copy of any and all of your written test results including blood results, CT scans, MRI's, pathology, surgical reports, etc. It is likely these will not be offered to you. You or your health advocate will need to ask for them.
- Ask questions about side effects and pursue avenues with the oncologist of ways to mitigate those side effects including natural path solutions as well. Consider/ask about Reiki, Acupuncture, Massage, holistic medicines, etc. Some may be recommended and others may not be depending upon your treatment.
- Bring two others to your initial appointment with your oncologist. One to listen, one to write down the answers to your questions (have yours questions written), and you, the patient, can just react.
- Make sure you understand how often you will see your oncologist and how to get in touch with them between appointments if necessary. Don't wait until your next appointment if you have an issue or a question that can ease your pain during chemotherapy or radiation.