

Questions for your healthcare team

Information sheet 08

I have a brain tumour. What do I ask the doctor or medical team?

These are some questions you may want to ask your doctor or key worker

1. About your brain tumour:

- What type of tumour do I have?
- How common is this type of tumour?
- How big is my tumour, where is it and how fast is it likely to grow?
- What symptoms will I have? How will my tumour affect my life and the way I feel?

2. About your treatment:

- What specific treatment do you recommend for my brain tumour – and why?
- How soon should I have the treatment?
- What will happen if I just wait a while before I do anything?
- Are there other ways of treating this condition?
- Why do you think this type of treatment is best for me?
- What are the pros and cons of this type of treatment?
- How long will it take me to recover from the treatment?
- Will I get back to how I was before the brain tumour?

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- What will my follow-up care be once I have had the treatment and for how long will it have to go on?
 - If I do have the treatment, what is the chance of the brain tumour coming back in the future?
 - What are the side effects of this treatment?
 - Should I continue to take all my regular medications including hormone replacement therapy and birth control? What if I am or get pregnant?
 - What effect will the treatment have on any other medical problems?
 - When will I be able to return to work full-time, part-time, and handle everyday activities again?
 - What help or support is out there for me, financially or otherwise, if needed?
 - Can my family care for me? Can I get extra help? When can I drive again?
 - I am still not sure about the treatment. Could you arrange a second opinion for me?

Your consultant will be familiar with such requests. It is common practice and perfectly acceptable for a patient with a serious condition to seek a second opinion from a consultant at another hospital. A second opinion can help put your mind at rest.

- Can you refer me to a physiotherapist or speech therapist to help me get better more quickly?
- Can you refer me to someone who could help me cope with the feelings I have about what has happened to me?
- Are there counselling services available to me? Will I have to pay and how much will it cost?
- Is there anything I will no longer be able to do or should not do?
- When will I be able to drive again?
- What about my usual hobbies, sports, leisure activities – can I continue doing them or when can I start doing them again?
- Is there anyone who can help me with my finances?
- Can anyone help me to claim benefits and grants I am entitled to?
- Can I go on holiday abroad? Will you write a letter to help me get travel insurance for my trip?

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- Are my children more at risk of a brain tumour because I have had one?
 - How will I know if my brain tumour has come back?
 - Is my tumour likely to come back and when is this likely to happen?

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Brain Tumour UK is the leading, caring charity committed to fighting brain tumours. Our personalised support is available online, on the phone, by email and through our support groups. Our scientific research improves the quality of life for brain tumour patients and identifies better treatments. We raise awareness to change things for the better, for everyone affected by a brain tumour.

Registered charity 1117538

Company limited by guarantee and registered in England no. 5983336

Registered office: Cawley Priory, South Pallant, Chichester, PO19 1SY

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