

PREPARING FOR YOUR DOCTOR'S VISIT

A Worksheet For People With Metastatic Breast Cancer



If you have **Metastatic Breast Cancer (MBC)**, this worksheet can help you talk to your health care team about symptoms, treatment options and side effects, and getting the emotional and practical support you need.

It is normal to worry but there are steps you can take to prepare for your doctor's visits and to take an active part in making decisions about your treatment.

Tips for Taking Control

- Know what kind of breast cancer you have. Ask your doctor, is it?
 - Hormone (estrogen and progesterone) receptor positive
 - HER2 (human epidermal growth factor receptor 2) positive
 - Triple negative (not estrogen, progesterone or HER2 positive)

Knowing your type will help determine your treatment options. Remember you can get a second opinion about your options at any point.

- Write down your questions before each doctor's visit.
- Take someone with you to appointments, for support and an extra set of eyes and ears.
- Tell your health care team about any symptoms, side effects or concerns you have.

Preparing for Your Doctor's Visit

Talk about what is important to you. Here are some suggestions to think about before your next appointment.

- What are you most worried about today?
- What are you most worried about in the future?
- How are you feeling today? Better or worse than your last appointment?
- If you are feeling either better or worse, what has changed?

Below are some of the things people with MBC may experience as shared by members of our Cancer Experience Registry. Think about how often they affect you. Talk to your health care team about how best to manage them.

| | Rarely | Sometimes | All the Time |
|---|--------|-----------|--------------|
| Feeling very tired | | | |
| Pain | | | |
| Difficulty thinking clearly or remembering | | | |
| Feeling anxious or depressed | | | |
| Swelling or hardness in your arm | | | |
| Shortness of breath | | | |
| Nausea/vomiting | | | |
| Weight loss or gain | | | |
| Loss of sexual desire or problems with intimacy | | | |
| Others: | | | |

How are cancer or treatment related side effects interfering with your life?

| | Rarely | Sometimes | All the Time |
|---|--------|-----------|--------------|
| Work (unable to work, unable to do tasks, missing work) | | | |
| Sleep | | | |
| Social relationships | | | |
| Sexual relationships | | | |
| Unable to do activities I normally enjoy | | | |
| Eating and/or exercise | | | |
| Unable to do daily activities (get dressed, prepare meals, manage finances) | | | |
| Others: | | | |

SETTING GOALS FOR TREATMENT

When you talk to your doctor about your treatment options, ask what the goal is. Also, think about your own values and tell your doctor what is important to you. Your goals may change over time.

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Physical Health and Wellbeing | <i>What do you want to be able to do?</i> |
| Family and Social Relationships | <i>What's going on in the lives of others that is important to you?</i> |
| Work | <i>Do you want to continue working? Can you adjust your schedule or responsibilities?</i> |
| Financial | <i>Do you have concerns about how to pay for your care? (insurance, co-pays, parking, other)</i> |
| Other | <i>What else is important to you?</i> |

GETTING SUPPORT

Think about who in your life is a helping presence. It might be your spouse or partner, friends, faith community, support group or co-workers. Make a list of specific ways they can help. Ask your health care team about resources for social, emotional and practical support. Let them know about your concerns.



OPEN TO OPTIONS™ CAN HELP

For help in developing your own set of questions to ask your doctor, schedule an Open to Options appointment. You will talk to a trained specialist who will work with you to clarify and prioritize your questions for your time with your doctor. To learn more about this and other programs offered by the Cancer Support Community, call our toll free Helpline at 1-888-793-9355 or go to www.cancersupportcommunity.org

Share your experience and make your voice heard, join the Cancer Experience Registry and participate in the special community of people facing metastatic breast cancer at www.cancerexperienceregistry.org.

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www.cancersupportcommunity.org 1-888-793-9355