

Getting ready for your appointment

For an appointment about a symptom, a screening result or a test. Fill in what you can. There are no wrong answers.

Appointment with

Date and time

Place or phone/video

1 My symptom notes

What I have noticed	
When it started	
How often it happens, and is it getting better or worse?	
What makes it better or worse	
Other changes (weight, appetite, sleep, energy, mood)	
What I am most worried about	

2 What to bring

- ☐ A list of medicines, including vitamins and herbal remedies
- ☐ Allergies and past reactions
- ☐ Letters, results or screening invitations
- ☐ My family history notes (below)
- ☐ Glasses, hearing aids, and a pen
- ☐ Someone to support me and take notes
- ☐ An interpreter, if I would like one (ask when booking)
- ☐ This checklist and my questions

3 Family history (if known)

Relative (e.g. mother, uncle)	Type of cancer	Age when diagnosed

Tip: say your most important worry first. Appointments can be short, and it is fine to say, "The main thing I want to understand today is..."

4 Questions to ask

Tick the ones you want to ask, and write the answers underneath. Create a list for your situation at oncogx.com.

- ☐ 1. What might be causing this?
- ☐ 2. Is this urgent, or is it reasonable to wait and watch?
- ☐ 3. What tests do you suggest, and what will each one tell us?
- ☐ 4. What are the benefits and limitations of those tests?
- ☐ 5. When and how will I get the results?
- ☐ 6. What should I watch for before my next appointment?
- ☐ 7. If we wait, how long, and what change should make me come back sooner?
- ☐ 8. Could my medicines or other conditions explain this?
- ☐ 9. Is there written information I can take home?
- ☐ 10. My own question:

5 Before I leave, I have written down

The next step is...

Results will be ready by...

The person or number to contact is...

If I haven't heard by this date, I will call...

Symptoms that mean I should come back sooner...

Out-of-hours number...

Don't wait for an appointment if you have severe or rapidly worsening symptoms such as difficulty breathing, chest pain, heavy bleeding, confusion, fainting, sudden weakness or severe pain. Seek emergency medical care immediately.

Feeling worried? That is normal. Bring someone with you, and ask if there is a nurse or counsellor you can talk to.

Remember: most symptoms turn out not to be cancer. Checking is how you find out, and how problems are caught early.