

DOCTOR DISCUSSION GUIDE

Managing Cervical Cancer

To fight your cervical cancer, you and your doctor will need to work as a team. Asking the right questions during your conversation will help you know what to expect and how to better navigate your condition. Familiarize yourself with these common terms before your appointment to help facilitate your discussion.

Vocabulary to Know

Your doctor might mention these common terms. Here's what they mean.

Cervical Intraepithelial Neoplasia (CIN)	Cervical intraepithelial neoplasia (CIN) is when abnormal cells appear on the surface of the cervix. This precancerous condition is usually classified in numbered stages, with stage 1 being less severe than stage 3.
Colposcopy	A colposcopy is when your doctor looks at the cervix through a special magnifying tool called a colposcope. This helps them see things that are otherwise invisible to the naked eye.
Cone Biopsy	Cone biopsies are surgical procedures that remove a cone-shaped piece of the cervical tissue to diagnose (and in some cases treat) cervical pre-cancers and cancers.
Human Papillomavirus (HPV)	Human Papillomavirus (HPV) is a virus that causes nearly all cases of cervical cancer, as well as several other types of cancer. While there are dozens of HPV subtypes, two—HPV 16 and 18—are responsible for about 70 percent of cervical cancer cases.
Loop Electrosurgical Excision Procedure	If you have an abnormal pap smear, your doctor might recommend a Loop Electrosurgical Excision Procedure (LEEP). This procedure uses a thin wire loop to scrape out abnormal cells from the cervix.
Radical Hysterectomy	A hysterectomy is when the uterus is surgically removed. A radical hysterectomy is when other body parties are removed as well, including the cervix, parametrium, and upper vagina.

Questions to Ask

These questions will help you start a conversation with your doctor about how to best manage your cervical cancer.

About Symptoms

- What things should I watch out for that could indicate the cancer has spread to other parts of my body?

About Causes & Risk Factors

- Will I be tested for HPV? And if the results come back positive, will the test be able to tell me what subtype I have?
- Do I have any other risk factors that might make the cancer harder to treat or more likely to spread?

About Diagnosis

- Will getting a cone biopsy affect my sex life or ability to have a healthy pregnancy?
- What stage of pre-cancer or cancer am I in? What does that mean for my prognosis and treatment options?
- Has the cancer spread outside of the cervix?

About Treatment

- What treatment options do you recommend for the stage of cancer I'm in? Will you help me understand the pros and cons of each?
- Will I need a radical hysterectomy?
- Will my treatment impact my ability to have children in the future? Are there are options that will help me keep my fertility?
- Should I avoid sex during treatment?
- Are there any lifestyle changes I can make that might help my radiation or chemotherapy treatments be more successful?
- How often will I need to get a pap smear or HPV test from now on?

About Coping

- Can you recommend a local support group where I can meet other cervical cancer patients and survivors?
