Managing Testicular Cancer

Dealing with testicular cancer, like any other cancer, can feel overwhelming. You and your doctor will work together to ensure you get the best treatment possible. 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tumor Markers</td>
<td>Substances that are found in the blood or urine, but which could be indicative of cancer when present in higher than normal level. For testicular cancer, these markers are alpha-fetoprotein (AFP), beta human chorionic gonadotropin (ß-HCG), and lactate dehydrogenase (LDH).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seminoma</td>
<td>A type of testicular cancer that grows slowly.</td>
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<td>Non-Seminoma</td>
<td>A type of testicular cancer that grows and spreads faster than seminomas.</td>
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<td>Mixed Germ Cell Tumors</td>
<td>Cancerous tumors that are made up of both seminoma and non-seminoma cells. When these develop, it is treated as non-seminoma.</td>
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<td>Stromal Tumor</td>
<td>A type of tumor that develops in tissues that produce hormones in the testicles.</td>
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<td>Stem Cell Transplant</td>
<td>A form of treatment for testicular cancer that’s combined with chemotherapy. It involves blood-forming stem cells being taken from your body and later infused/transplanted back after you’ve undergone high dose chemotherapy.</td>
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<td>Orchietomy</td>
<td>A form of treatment of testicular cancer that involves removing one or both testicles surgically. To treat most kinds of testicular cancer, you will likely have to undergo an orchietomy first.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oncologist</td>
<td>A doctor that's specially trained to treat cancer.</td>
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Questions to Ask
These questions will help you start a conversation with your doctor about how to best manage testicular cancer.

About Symptoms
- What type of testicular cancer do I have?
- Are there any symptoms that my cancer is spreading that I should watch out for?

About Recurrence
- What are the chances of my testicular cancer recurring after treatment?

About Diagnosis
- What stage has my cancer gotten to?

About Treatment
- Given the indications of my cancer, what treatment option or combination would be best?
- What are the side effects I’m likely to experience after my orchiectomy?
- How long will it take for me to recover after my orchiectomy?
- What are the side effects I’m likely to experience if I choose either treatment options?
- What type of doctors will I have on my treatment team?

About Coping
- Is it advisable to bank my sperm now?

About Living With Testicular Cancer
- Are there any lifestyle changes I’ll have to make after my treatment?
- What will follow up look like for me after my cancer is treated?