

EXPERT TIPS

TIP	“There have been a lot of advances in lung cancer treatment. We have seen many new treatments to be FDA-approved in the past few years. So it's really good to have all these options to offer our patients. However, not everyone is benefiting in an equal way from all these advances. The research priority is to understand why some patients are benefiting and why some are not. As researchers, we are really trying to understand why different groups of patients benefit directly from immunotherapy and develop strategies for those who do not benefit.” - Dr. Christina Baik
TIP	“Knowing the cancer one is dealing with is extremely important. Know your cancer stage, know the type of lung cancer that you have. There are more than ten different ways to treat newly diagnosed metastatic lung cancer, so it is very important for patients to know what their cancer subtype is.” - Dr. Christina Baik
TIP	“If your doctor says, “Your cancer stage is not very clear, your tumor subtype is not clear,” then ask why that is, what type of additional testing that needs to be done.” - Dr. Christina Baik
TIP	“If a doctor tells you that you belong to a group of patients with a poor prognosis, ask why that is to understand the reasons for that. I’m a big proponent of getting second opinions, because for many treatments decisions medical judgment is involved. So it is often helpful to get a different perspective on the same set of information.” - Dr. Christina Baik
TIP	“There are many clinical trials that are out there. Really work with your doctor in identifying these trials. If there is a academic center that's close to you, at least inquire about that. In lung cancer, fortunately, there are many wonderful advocacy groups, and these advocacy groups can be great resources in finding out about clinical trials and where to seek out opinions.” - Dr. Christina Baik
TIP	“If there's a particular clinical trial that you're really interested in based on discussions with other patients or through advocacy groups, usually the contact information is listed on the clinicaltrials.gov website, and the contact number is usually for the research team who can give you more information about that particular trial.” - Dr. Christina Baik

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PRIORITIES FOR NEWLY DIAGNOSED PATIENTS FACING LUNG CANCER

- Lobby for genetic testing if you are a non-small cell lung cancer patient.
 - For small cell lung cancer patients, genetic testing is not done, as these tumors do not have a genetic abnormality that can be given actual treatment for.
- Know your type and genetic subtype of lung cancer.
 - If the answer isn't clear, ask what follow-up tests need to be done.
 - If there isn't enough biopsy material to do a follow-up test, ask if you can get another one or if blood biopsy would be helpful.
 - This is very important to do so, because treatment options are drastically different whether there's a genetic target in the cancer or not.
- Know your stage of lung cancer.
- Understand your tumor mutation and what that means for treatment.
- Have an advocate, such as a family member or friend, attend appointments with you and ask questions/take notes.
- Get a second opinion or consultation with another lung cancer specialist to understand your diagnosis better.
 - You will not offend your doctor, this is a common practice to do so.
 - However, do not wait too long before you start treatment in order to get multiple second opinions.
- Discuss if clinical trials are an option.
- Connect with other patients and/or patient advocacy groups.

POPULATIONS WITH SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- There are some types of lung cancer or certain demographics (age, socioeconomic status, geographic density, gender) that are associated with poorer treatment outcomes. If your doctor tells you that you may fall into this category, don't panic. Ask:
 - Why am I in that group?
 - What aspects of my cancer contribute to poorer outcomes? (Factors can include stage, type of cancer, genetic markers, and other health conditions)
 - Can you refer me to another expert to get a second opinion? (This will allow you to hear if other doctors also agree that you're in that group.)
 - Are there clinical trials or other treatments outside of the standard treatments that I can take advantage of so that it could potentially work better?
 - What lifestyle changes can improve my outcome?
 - What support services are available to me?
 - Would more frequent follow-up scans and tests make an impact?

Sources: 1, 2

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