

# Getting a Second Opinion

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## Key Points

- Everyone with a diagnosis of cancer should be referred to a medical oncologist.
- When you get a second opinion, an outside provider will review your charts and history. This process may give you additional options for diagnosis and treatment.
- A second opinion is a good way to gain more information about your cancer.
- Doctors are not offended or insulted if their patients seek a second opinion.

The treatment of cancer has changed dramatically in the past five-10 years. New drugs and techniques are constantly being created. Medical oncologists are up-to-date on these advances.

## The Second Opinion Process

When you get a second opinion try to have all of your medical records with you. The outside provider will want to review everything. The outside provider may be able to suggest a clinical trial or have new information.

Sometimes the new provider will give you the same diagnosis and treatment plan that you already had. This can be reassuring.

## The Providers

Different doctors have different styles and communication skills. By obtaining a second opinion, you may find a provider who is a better match with your personality or needs.

Many patients fear they will offend their provider by seeking a second opinion. Most physicians are not upset by this even if the patient decides to choose a new doctor. We want to provide the best possible care.

## So What's the Bottom Line?

A second opinion can assure you that the suggested treatment is the best option for you.

Second opinions can provide you with additional information about your cancer.

Don't be afraid to seek a second opinion and ask your doctor for a copy of all of your medical records.

Here at Swedish we see many patients seeking a second opinion. We also send many of our patients to other cancer centers for a second opinion. To schedule an appointment, please call the Swedish Cancer Institute at 206-386-2323.