

Ask questions. Don't be afraid to ask your doctor or nurse to explain something you don't understand. You might say, "That doesn't quite make sense to me. Can you explain it more simply?"

Bring a friend or family member to take notes during appointments. They can record your questions and answers so you can digest the information later.

Speak up. If something is unclear or concerning, bring it up in a constructive way. It is important to voice your concerns and opinions.

Tell them what you know. Communicate what you know and what you want to know. Ask your provider to explain things to you in your terms. It can be helpful to repeat back what you hear. You might start off a sentence with, "So you mean I should..."

Ask your nurse. Oncology nurses are very knowledgeable and can be great resources for you and your family.

Look at pictures. Ask to see scans and reports, or ask the doctor to draw a diagram or show you a video. Every person has a different learning style and seeing the information might make it easier to understand.

Tell them what works. If your provider explains something in a certain way that works for you, share it with them. You might say, "Seeing pictures really helped me understand what you were trying to explain."

Say thanks. If your provider goes above and beyond or makes you feel at ease, express appreciation for their efforts.

Be your own advocate! If your provider is not meeting your needs, you are entitled to tell them and/or switch providers. You are in control of your treatment and you should do whatever you find necessary to get the best care possible.