

Tumour Test: questions to ask your doctor



If you or a loved one has recently been diagnosed with cancer, asking your oncologist or surgeon about tumour testing can be pivotal for your treatment. Genetic testing can reveal if your cancer is linked to a genetic mutation and can speed up the process of identifying the most effective treatment options.

Remember, it's important to ask for a tumour test as soon as you're diagnosed.

The list of questions below will help guide this important conversation with your oncologist or surgeon. These general questions are designed to help you get started; for specific inquiries about your diagnosis, testing, and treatment options, always consult directly with your doctor.

Understanding if your cancer is linked to a gene mutation:

- Have I had germline testing previously?
- What are the benefits of understanding if my cancer is linked to a hereditary or non-hereditary gene mutation?
- If my cancer is linked to a gene mutation, why is it important to further understand if that mutation is hereditary (i.e. germline/blood) or non-hereditary (i.e. somatic/tumour) in origin?
- What tests are available to understand if my cancer is linked to either a hereditary (i.e. germline/blood) or non-hereditary (i.e. somatic/tumour) genetic mutation?
- Are there any out-of-pocket expenses associated with genetic testing?
- Am I eligible for a tumour (somatic) test?
- How is a tumour (somatic) test conducted, and how is it different to other tests?



- When is the best time to undertake a tumour (somatic) test?
- How soon after undertaking a tumour (somatic) test can I expect the results?
- Am I eligible for a blood (germline) test?
- When is the best time to undertake a blood (germline) test?
- How soon after undertaking a blood (germline) test can I expect the results?

Understanding what treatment options might be best for you:

- Has my tumour been tested for other biomarkers that might affect my treatment options?
- What are the next steps in determining potential treatment options after receiving the results of the tumour/blood test?
- How do treatment strategies differ for ovarian cancer when the gene mutation is hereditary (germline/blood) compared to when it is non-hereditary (somatic/tumour)?
- If my ovarian cancer is not linked to a genetic mutation (hereditary or non-hereditary), how does this impact my treatment plan?