



# Remote Second Opinion Guide

"I wonder if my doctor is staying on top of the research for my unique cancer."  
"I wonder if there's another treatment out there that might work better."

## What to know

These are common thoughts cancer patients have - and rightfully so. Our lives are on the line. Getting a second opinion (and sometimes third!) opinion from someone who specializes in your unique cancer is one way to get some peace of mind on this.

We appreciate our medical teams! Seeking a second opinion has nothing to do with them, and everything to do with *you, your peace of mind and your options.*

Did you know some oncologists and cancer centers are now offering remote second opinions? It is a fantastic option for many of us - who either can't or do not wish to travel.

\*BEFORE signing any agreements or paying any money, whatsoever, we recommend you read through this resource in its entirety.

## What to do

### Define Your Timeline

Do I have time to delay treatment?  
I am so anxious to get started on my first or next treatment.

We know time is of the essence, and the waiting is sometimes the hardest part. In some cases, a patient should not put off treatment. In other cases, patients can afford to wait a few weeks. It's best to ask your doctor. Here's a suggestion on how to do that.

"Hi Dr. X, for my own peace of mind, I would really like to get a second opinion before moving forward, if possible. Is there any reason, medically-speaking, that I should not wait a few weeks?"

## Set Your Expectations

What can I expect from a second opinion?

We know how important cancer treatment is and how desperate we can be to make sure we're doing the right thing. Getting a qualified second opinion is a great way to do that. In fact, at SURVIVEiT® **we believe there are few things more important than getting a qualified second opinion.**

There are important things to know before seeking and receiving that second opinion. Starting with setting expectations. There are two possible outcomes from getting a second opinion:

## Understand Possible Outcomes

### OUTCOME 1:

Your second opinion doctor agrees with what your initial doctor is recommending; therefore, confirming the treatment strategy.

### OUTCOME 2:

Your second opinion doctor proposes a different treatment option, or options. We know this can be confusing for people like us that have no medical background.

What can I do?

A.

**Know your goals.**  
It's important that you know what your treatment and quality of life goals are. That can help determine which treatment strategy is best to pursue.

B.

**Talk with the doctor you are most comfortable with.**  
He/she should be open to answering any questions, concerns you may have.

C.

**Trust your gut.**  
After asking all of your questions, what feels right to you?

## What to do

### Understand Your Next Steps

How do I make this happen?

- 1. A great place to start is contacting an NCI-designated cancer center ([find one here](#)), and ask if any of their doctors who specialize in your cancer offer remote second opinions. Live near one? Mark an in-person appointment if you prefer!
- 2. Find out what your out-of-pocket cost will be, and what that includes, doesn't include.
  - a. Does your insurance company cover? Partially reimburse? Zero reimbursement? Are there scholarships or financial assistance available?
  - b. Some second opinions include a report and one call with the physician(s) who reviewed your case. Some will charge for any additional communications beyond that initial meeting.
- 3. Ask for the name of the doctor (and place of current employment) - This is very important. If someone tells you they cannot provide the name of the doctor that would be reviewing your case, we highly recommend that you NOT pursue a second opinion with them. This is your right as a patient.
  - a. Once you receive the name of the doctor, do your own research on him/her. This is when Google can be your friend. Things to look for when researching that doctor:
    - i. Is their name affiliated with specific research around your cancer such as a publication in a medical journal or being listed as an investigator on a clinical trial? These are great things! It shows that your doctor is involved in the study and advancement of cancer care for your type of cancer.
    - ii. Any awards given with relation to your cancer or by their colleagues?
- 4. Ask if they would be open to talking with your local doctor if necessary. Would there be an extra charge?
- 5. What will they need to review your case? Scans, summaries, pathology reports, etc. How do you get these to them? Where do you send them?
- 6. When can you expect to hear from them once they have reviewed your case? What materials will you receive?
  - a. \*Credible doctors and institutions should provide you with a written report that summarizes your case as well as their understanding of your diagnosis, and finally their recommendation(s).
- 7. Thoroughly read the agreement. Ask questions about anything that you do not understand.
- 8. Be sure to reference our [21 Questions to Ask Your Oncologist](#) resource during your call!

### Read This Sample Report

Here is a sample report from the University of Colorado Cancer Center.



Click to view