

My Cancer Center Evaluation Checklist

Use this guide to ask critical questions when visiting or researching a cancer center.

Part 1: Medical Expertise and Technology

Does this center specialize in my specific type of cancer? How many cases like mine does this center treat per year? (High volume often equals more expertise). Is the center NCI-Designated? (National Cancer Institute) Is the center accredited by the Commission on Cancer (CoC)?

Treatment Questions (Oncology Center):

Will my case be reviewed by a multidisciplinary "tumor board"? **Medical Oncology:** What are my chemotherapy, immunotherapy, or targeted therapy options? **Surgical Oncology:** Do you offer minimally invasive, laparoscopic, or robotic surgery options for my condition? **Radiation Oncology:** What type of radiation technology do you use? (e.g., IMRT, SBRT). How do you protect healthy tissue?

Part 2: Support, Navigation, and Team

Who will be my primary "point of contact" or patient navigator?

Cancer Support Services:

What **financial navigation** services do you offer? (Help with insurance, co-pays, grants). Are **oncology social workers** available to assist my family and me? What **counseling** or mental health services are available (for both patients and caregivers)? Do you have **oncology dietitians** on staff? What **palliative care** services are available to help manage my symptoms (like pain or nausea) *during* treatment?

Part 3: Clinical Trials and Research

Does this center offer clinical trials for my type and stage of cancer? Who is the research coordinator I can speak to? How do I find out if I am eligible?

Part 4: Logistics and "Feel"

How easy is it to park? Is parking validated or free? (A) How long is the wait time for an initial appointment? Do you offer telehealth or virtual visits? **Chemo Infusion Center:** Can I see the infusion center? Is it comfortable? Can I bring a family member?

Communication: How do I contact my care team after hours or on weekends? Do you use an online patient portal?

Overall Impression:

() Did the staff listen to me and answer my questions clearly? () Do I feel comfortable and respected here?