

# 100 QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

ROCKINGHAM COMMUNITY COLLEGE



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the  
for cancer?

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When is surgery  
used to treat  
cancer?

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How can I be  
sure to get the  
information I want  
from my doctor?

oooo

Is my treatment  
more likely to  
work if I get more  
severe side effects?

oooo

How do I adjust to  
being a survivor?

## About Cancer Symptoms and Cancer Treatment Side Effects *Second Edition*



by  
Joanne Frankel Kelvin, RN, MSN, AOCN  
Leslie B. Tyson, MS, APN-BC, OCN

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# 100 Questions & Answers About Cancer Symptoms and Cancer Treatment Side Effects *Second Edition*

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***Part One: Cancer and Cancer Treatment*** **1**

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**Questions 1–15** describe cancer and various cancer treatments, including:

- What is cancer?
- Why does cancer cause symptoms?
- What are the treatments for cancer?

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***Part Two: Getting Information and Making Decisions*** **31**

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**Questions 16–24** discuss strategies for making informed decisions about treatment, including:

- How can I be sure to get the information I want from my doctor?
- How can I find clinical trials that might be appropriate for me?
- I feel so overwhelmed by all the information I'm getting. How do I make decisions about my treatment?

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***Part Three: Comfort, Activity, and Sleep*** **49**

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**Questions 25–34** discuss options for improving your comfort and quality of life during cancer treatment:

- Will I have pain? What are the options available to treat my pain?
- I feel tired much of the time. What can I do to increase my energy?
- Can I exercise?

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***Part Four: Blood Counts and Skin Problems*** **71**

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**Questions 35–45** address common concerns about avoiding infection and caring for your skin and hair, including:

- I have heard that chemotherapy may cause drops in my blood counts. What does this mean?
- What do I do if my red blood cell count is low?
- What is shingles? Is there a vaccine for shingles, and should I get it?

## ***Part Five: Problems with Breathing, Nutrition, Digestion, and Urination*** 91

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**Questions 46–61** discuss ways to cope with effects of treatment on breathing, nutrition, digestion, and elimination, including:

- How do I know if I need oxygen?
- What can I do to increase my appetite and maintain my weight?
- What can I do for mouth sores?

## ***Part Six: Appearance and Sexual Issues*** 127

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**Questions 62–69** discuss changes in personal appearance and sexual health brought on by cancer treatment, such as:

- I have gained weight from my cancer treatment. What can I do to lose weight?
- I don't feel the desire to be sexually intimate with my partner the way I used to. What can I do to maintain our relationship?
- Will I be able to conceive a child after treatment?

## ***Part Seven: Neurologic Problems, Fluid Retention, and Blood Chemistry*** 147

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**Questions 70–81** describe problems related to nerves, blood and blood vessels, and fluid buildup, including:

- What is cerebral edema? How is this managed?
- Why are my legs swollen? What can I do to minimize the swelling?
- I have heard that some people can get diabetes from their treatment. How is this diagnosed and treated?

## ***Part Eight: Other Health-Related Issues*** 175

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**Questions 82–87** address other health concerns not directly related to the cancer symptoms or treatment side effects, such as:

- I get a flu shot every year. Should I get one now that I am getting treated for cancer?
- Can I drink alcohol?
- Should I stop smoking?

## ***Part Nine: Emotional and Social Concerns*** 185

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**Questions 88–100** address emotional effects, social impacts, and caretaker concerns regarding cancer and cancer treatment, including:

- How can I better cope with having cancer?

- How do I go on with my life and start feeling “normal” again?
- How can I talk with my family and friends about my cancer?

<b>Appendix</b>	<b>215</b>
<b>Glossary</b>	<b>217</b>
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