

Bowen
icon cancer centre

CHECKLIST:
Questions to Ask
Your Doctor After
Cancer Diagnosis





ABOUT BOWEN ICON CANCER CENTRE

At Bowen Icon Cancer Centre, we live our vision every day – to deliver the best possible care with no wait list.

We proudly offer

Private radiation therapy, chemotherapy, immunotherapy, hormone therapy and targeted therapies

Highly experienced cancer specialists supporting you throughout your entire treatment

World-class technology, including the latest radiation therapy treatment techniques

No wait list for consultation or treatment

A commitment to affordable care

A friendly and supportive environment for our patients and their whanāu

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DOCTOR APPOINTMENT TIPS

We understand that a cancer diagnosis can be confronting and that searching for the answers to your questions can be stressful and confusing; this can make it hard to have a clear head and retain information. Here are a few tips for making the most out of appointments with your doctor.



1. Bring along a support person

Not only can a family member or friend provide emotional support, but they can also assist by writing down information and ensure all your questions are answered.



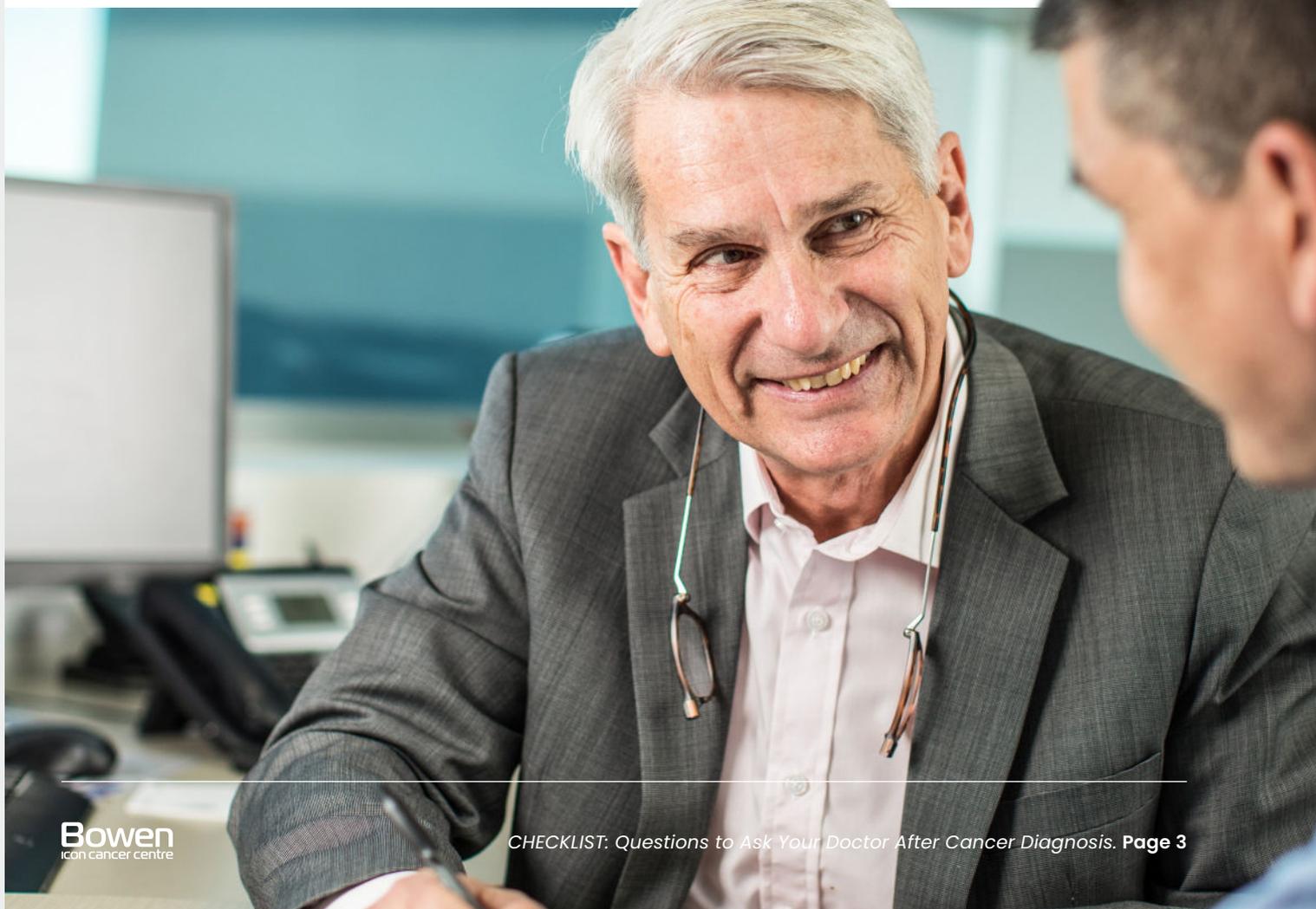
2. Book a long consultation

Discussing a cancer diagnosis is not a time you want to feel rushed. By booking a longer appointment with your doctor there will be additional time to have your questions answered.



3. Record the conversation

All smart phones can be used as a voice recorder. Ask your doctor if they are happy for you to record the conversation. This will save you from having to take notes quickly during your appointment.



CHECKLIST: Questions to Ask Your Doctor After Cancer Diagnosis

We've put together a list of questions to ask your doctor to help you be more informed and have an active role in your care.

TIP: Print pages 4 to 6 and take this checklist along to your next appointment

Understanding Your Diagnosis:

What type of cancer do I have?

.....

Can you explain my pathology report to me in simple language?

.....

What stage is the cancer? What does this stage mean?

.....

Is there any indication that the cancer has spread to other parts of my body?

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How fast is this type of cancer expected to grow or spread?

.....

Treatment Options:

What are the treatment options available for my type of cancer?

.....

What are the goals of each treatment option?

.....

How successful are these treatments typically?

.....

How long will treatment take?

.....

Will I need to be hospitalised for treatment, or is it done on an outpatient basis?

.....

How will my daily life be affected during the treatment?

.....

What are the potential side effects of each treatment?

.....

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How are these side effects likely to impact my future lifestyle?

.....

Should I consider a second opinion before starting treatment? If so, can you recommend anyone?

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Are there any clinical trials available for my type of cancer?

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How long before I need to decide on my treatment path?

.....

Lifestyle and Support:

Are there lifestyle changes I should make to support my treatment or overall health?

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How might the diagnosis and treatment affect my emotional and mental health?

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Can you recommend support groups or counselling services?

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What resources are available for my family to better understand and cope with my diagnosis?

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Health and Nutrition:

Are there any dietary restrictions or recommendations I should follow?

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Can I continue my current medications, vitamins, or supplements during treatment?

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Should I make any changes to my physical activity routine?

.....

TIP: Print pages 4 to 6 and take this checklist along to your next appointment

Follow-up and Ongoing Care:

What kind of follow-up will I need after treatment?

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How often will I need to come in for check-ups?

.....

Are there signs or symptoms I should watch out for?

.....

How will we know if the treatment is working?

.....

What happens if treatment doesn't work?

.....

Financial and Practical Considerations:

What will be the cost of the treatment?

.....

Who can I talk to about managing work, travel, and family responsibilities during treatment?

.....



Looking for treatment with no wait-list?

Talk to our team at Bowen Icon Cancer Centre about your cancer treatment options.

CONTACT US

boweniconcancercentre.co.nz/cancer-patients/becoming-a-patient/

STEPHEN'S CANCER TREATMENT STORY

Bowen Icon Cancer Centre patient, Stephen Clarke, found a unique way to help get through his cancer treatment. He shares his story below.



On day one of my treatment, I set myself a personal target of wearing a different football shirt every day over the 28 sessions to give myself a goal and to make a difference to the days. Each shirt reminded me of a different part of my life from the early 1990s to present day.

This provided me with a psychological tool to make the treatments about my journey through life, the highs and lows that come with sport and to reinforce that at the centre it's all about a journey as a team.

On day 27 the medical staff surprised me by all wearing a football shirt to mark the end of the radiation therapy phase of my life journey.

It was really special to me and brought tears to my eyes. I appreciate that those busy clinicians with many patients to care for had gone to this effort.

I was so humbled by this small gesture of being made to feel part of a team to achieve our shared goals [...].

I realised that in those few moments of small talk over a month or so, that we had built a relationship and knew something about each other.

The power of just taking a moment to connect at a human level wasn't necessary to achieve the tasks and professional outcomes and successfully play our roles but brought moments of happiness into our days.

These are life lessons I can bring along with me back to my work whānau and the real positivity that can come from what appears to be a negative situation.

The incredible support I've had from my wife and children, employer and the staff at the Bowen Icon Cancer Centre can only leave me with a hugely life-affirming and positive experience, even if it was precipitated by the negative cause of getting throat cancer.

Ngā mihi maioha!"



STEPS FROM DIAGNOSIS TO TREATMENT

When you or a loved one is diagnosed with cancer, it is normal to feel unsure how and where to start with your treatment. The following steps are a common pathway for patients from an initial diagnosis to treatment at Bowen Icon Cancer Centre.



1. Getting a referral

It's important to remember that you have a say in where you are treated and who your specialist is. If right for you, ask your doctor for a referral to a doctor at Bowen Icon Cancer Centre. We have dedicated specialists with experience across all cancer types. We welcome you to contact our centre directly if you have any questions about whether Bowen Icon Cancer Centre is right for you.



2. Your first appointment

At the first appointment, you will meet with your experienced doctor who will talk you through your diagnosis and treatment plan, and address any concerns and questions you may have. Your doctor will continue to care for you throughout your entire treatment and beyond.



3. Before starting treatment

Further to your initial appointment, one of our experienced care team will take the time to discuss your treatment, what to expect, possible treatment side effects and how to manage them. They will also chat about possible anxiety you and your family might be feeling. Our team works together with your doctor to ensure your care is tailored to your needs and those of your loved ones.



4. Starting treatment

The length of your appointment and cycle depends on the treatment being given. Throughout your treatment and beyond, your doctor and care team are here to monitor your progress, address your side effects and listen to any concerns or fears you may have. Never be afraid to seek clarity and reassurance to ensure you are confident in your treatment and choices.

COMMITMENT TO AFFORDABLE CARE

We understand that cancer can be a very emotional time for you and your loved one. At Bowen Icon Cancer Centre, we are committed to providing you with care that is both exceptional, and affordable.

The costs depend on what type of treatment you're having and the likely cost of any tests or medications. Rest assured, we will work with you to ensure you're aware of any out-of-pocket expenses and make sure there are no surprises throughout your treatment.

Here are the key things you need to know about the cost of receiving cancer treatment at Bowen Icon Cancer Centre.

Self Funded Patients

If you have an insurance excess, co-payment, basic cover or no health insurance, our reception team can provide you with a detailed estimate of costs and talk you through all the expected costs of your treatment.

Health Insurance

Bowen Icon Cancer Centre is an Affiliated Provider to Southern Cross Health Society.

If you are a Southern Cross member or have insurance with NIB, we can apply for your insurance pre-approval and process claims on your behalf. If there is a shortfall, or a co-payment is needed prior to treatment, we will let you know as part of your cost estimate.

If you have health insurance with another provider, we will provide both you and your insurer with a written cost estimate for the proposed cancer treatment prior to starting treatment. You can then speak directly with your insurer to find out what parts of the cost estimate will be covered by your policy, as well as:

- your insurance value limit
- any excess that may apply
- any exclusions or parts of the cost estimate that you will need to fund yourself

We recommend that you check with your individual policy agreement and talk to your insurer to understand what you're covered for.

If you have questions about becoming a patient at Bowen Icon Cancer Centre, we're here to help. Reach out to talk to our team about your treatment options.

MAKE AN ENQUIRY

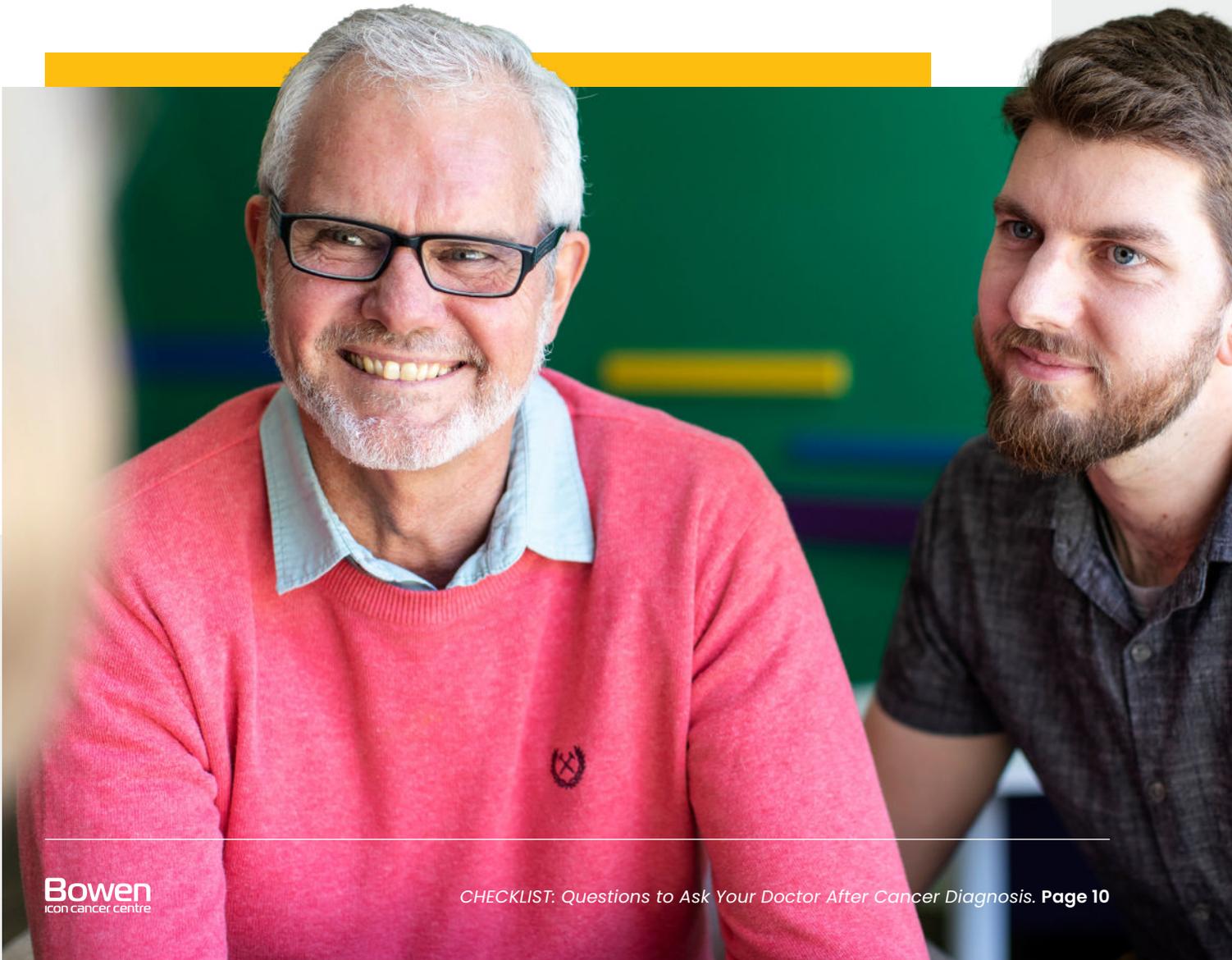
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The continuity of care is an important factor for me. It means that every day I go into the centre for treatment I'm welcomed by the same people who know me and my story – it is a real comfort.

The team were friendly and very experienced, so I knew that I would be looked after. After my first visit, I remember feeling reassured that I was going to be okay. Everyone was so welcoming, I felt safe and secure."

- Bowen Icon Cancer Patient



Delivering the best cancer care possible, with no wait-list.

Talk to our team at Bowen Icon Cancer Centre about your treatment options.

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DISCLAIMER

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