

## GETTING INFORMATION ABOUT CANCER

Just as we are all different in all sorts of ways, we all need different amounts of information about our disease.

These are some suggestions about the kind of questions you may want to ask in order to make decisions about your disease.

It is often helpful to take a relative or friend along to see the doctor, so that you can discuss what was said.

- What type of tumour is it?
- How big is the primary tumour?
- Has it spread to the lymph nodes?
- Has it spread anywhere else in the body?
- Is there information I should know from the pathologist or radiologist?
- What are the treatment options? (usually surgery, radiotherapy, chemotherapy or a combination of these)
- What treatment do you recommend?
- Are there alternatives?
- How will we check whether the treatment is working?
- Can I be assured that I will be told if there is no point in continuing the treatment?
- What will happen if I start the treatment and then decide to stop before it is completed?
- What is the cost of the suggested treatment?
- Where can the treatment be done and who will carry it out?
- Is this a type of cancer which is best treated in a specialist centre?
- Is there someone you can recommend for a second opinion?
- How will my GP be involved while I am having this treatment? Or “there seem to be many specialists involved- who will co-ordinate the care planning?”
- Will I have to go into hospital and for how long?
- What are the side effects of the suggested treatment and how long do they usually last?
- What will happen if I choose not to have this treatment?
- Can I make a time to call you if I have other questions?

### **References:**

*Morra Marion, Potts Eve Choices Avon Books 1980 New York*

*Sikora Karol, Thomas Hilary Fight cancer BBC Books 1989 London*