

Before Brain Tumor Surgery



QUESTIONS FOR YOUR HOSPITAL CARE TEAM

- What imaging will be necessary before surgery? Would I benefit from [advanced imaging techniques](#)?
- How aggressive is my tumor's growth?
- What parts of my brain are currently affected by my tumor, and what areas are at risk if my tumor continues to grow?
- How does the [tumor location](#) possibly impact my cognitive, emotional, and physical state?
- What [centers specialize](#) in the type of tumor I have?
- What specialists will be part of my care team?
- Is it safe to delay surgery to pursue [a second opinion](#)?
- Are there [clinical trials](#) that I might qualify for that require specific surgical procedures?
- Are there treatments that have to be placed during surgery that I would be a good candidate for?
- Are there clinical trials that will no longer be available to me once surgery is performed?
- Should I prepare a [living will, power of attorney, and healthcare proxy](#)? Can you

share any [resources](#) to assist me in this process? Is there someone here I can connect with for more information and assistance?

- Can I have a sample of my tumor tissue frozen for any future clinical trial or treatment opportunities?
- Can a sample of my tumor tissue be sent for research? What research programs would benefit from my tumor sample?

PATHOLOGY AND BIOMARKER TESTING

- What types of tests will be needed for a proper diagnosis?
- What is the difference between [pathology](#) and [biomarker testing](#)?
- Will I need a biopsy or surgery to get a tissue sample for testing?
- Will you use the [2021 WHO Classification of CNS Tumors](#) to diagnose my tumor?
- Do you conduct biomarker testing at this facility, or will my tissue be sent to an external company? Is there enough tumor tissue for additional biomarker testing if we want to send it for external testing?
- How can I get a sample of my tumor tested for biomarkers to learn if any [targeted therapies](#) might treat my [tumor type](#)?

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- Which biomarkers should be tested for my tumor type? Can you explain how they might affect my response to therapy and treatment?
 - Are there any reliable sources where I can read about the biomarkers you explained?
 - What is the process for determining the pathology of my tumor?
 - How long will it take to get results from the pathology and [biomarker testing](#), and how will I be notified?
 - Who will go over the results of my pathology and biomarker reports with me and explain what they mean for my diagnosis, treatment, and prognosis?
 - What do the results indicate about my prognosis?
 - Does my insurance cover the costs for biomarker testing? If not, is there financial assistance available?
 - Are there targeted therapy drugs, [immunotherapies](#), [clinical trials](#), or other treatments I might be eligible for based on the results of my biomarker tests? If yes, what is this drug or treatment called, and do you recommend it?
- What sort of training did you receive to specialize in tumors like this?
 - What other specialists will be a part of my surgical team (e.g., anesthesiologist, surgical technician, resident, fellow, primary surgeon, or secondary surgeon)?
 - Does your institution have a regular [tumor board](#)?
 - Will my case be presented at that tumor board?
 - Do you have [clinical trials](#) open for this type of tumor?
 - What should I expect on the day I come in for surgery?
 - Will I be awake or asleep during surgery? If I will be awake, can you explain that process? What are the risks and benefits?
 - How will you protect my brain from potential damage?
 - Due to the size and location of my tumor, what are the risks and benefits of surgery for me? What will be the plan for dealing with potential cognitive and physical effects after initial recovery?
 - Where and how big will the incision be? Will you have to shave my head?
 - What is the recovery process after brain tumor surgery?
 - How long will I be hospitalized after surgery?

QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN CONSIDERING YOUR NEUROSURGEON

- Do you specialize in primary brain tumors?
- How many surgeries do you do in a year for this tumor type and/or location?

