

A guide to talking with your doctor about your risk for bladder cancer



If you notice changes in your urine or urinary habits, **don't wait to talk to a doctor** — especially if you have risk factors for bladder cancer. Use this guide to think through important questions and prepare for your next appointment.

Ask about your risk for bladder cancer

If you think you are experiencing symptoms, ask your doctor about your risk for bladder cancer. **People who smoke and people who work with certain chemicals have a higher risk of developing bladder cancer** (for example — manufacturing employees, firefighters, painters and hairdressers). Bladder cancer is more common in men, and risk increases with age, as well as if you have had prior cancer treatments or ongoing bladder irritation. If you fall into one or more of these categories, talk more with your doctor.

Take note of symptoms

The most common early sign of bladder cancer is **blood in the urine**. Changes in urinary habits — detailed on the next page — can also be a warning sign. These symptoms may not be caused by bladder cancer — your doctor can help find what may be causing your symptoms by asking about your medical history, conducting a physical exam, testing your urine and may order laboratory or other tests.



Questions you may need to be prepared to answer

Do you currently smoke, or have you smoked in the past? If yes, about how much and for how long?

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What kinds of chemicals and materials do you, or have you, worked with and for how long?

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Answer these questions in the notes section and check the boxes of any symptoms you've experienced, below:



When did you first see a change?



Does the symptom come and go?



About how often do you experience it?



Does anything seem to make it better or worse?

☐ **Urine color** has changed to orange, pink or red

Note:

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☐ **Pain or burning** during urination

Note:

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☐ **Trouble going** or urine stream is weak

Note:

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☐ **Frequency** of urination has increased

Note:

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☐ **Urgency** to go has increased, even when bladder isn't full

Note:

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☐ **Getting up to go** many times during the night

Note:

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Early detection matters.

When bladder cancer is found early, people may have more options. That's why it's important to flag symptoms and get checked right away — even if they seem minor or come and go.