Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Getting Cancer Treatment from an Oncologist Outside of Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center (MSK)

This resource will help guide you when you get some or most of your care outside of MSK.

Who is your primary oncologist (cancer doctor)?

Your primary oncologist is the cancer doctor who prescribes your cancer treatment. Your treatment can include chemotherapy, immunotherapy, hormone therapy, or targeted therapy. It can be given into a vein (intravenous or IV), as a shot, or you may take it by mouth.

For your safety, the doctor who orders your treatment and other members of that care team must manage your care. This includes:

- Examining you to make sure it's safe for you to get treatment.
- Ordering lab tests to make sure it's safe for you to get treatment.
- Managing your symptoms and any side effects from treatment.
- Communicating with you about your care.

Shared care with an outside oncologist

Shared care is when you are being cared for by an oncologist outside of MSK for some time and plan to return to MSK for care.

Your MSK doctor will take care of your cancer treatment needs until your oncologist outside of MSK takes over your treatment plan.

When your outside oncologist takes over your treatment plan, your MSK doctor **cannot**:

- Prescribe medicine, including take-home chemotherapy and targeted therapy.
- Refill prescriptions.
- Manage your symptoms or any side effects from treatment.
- Oversee your care.

Your MSK doctor can still offer their advice and expertise about your diagnosis once your outside oncologist takes over your treatment plan. You may contact a member of your MSK care team if you need to. Your MSK care team will talk with you and then contact your current care team to discuss your treatment plan.

For your safety, if you are having symptoms from your cancer treatment, you must contact your current oncologist who is prescribing the treatment.

If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

Getting Cancer Treatment from an Oncologist Outside of Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center (MSK) - Last updated on April 28, 2026
All rights owned and reserved by Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center