

Kidney Cancer: Talking to Your Doctor About Treatment

Urology Care
FOUNDATION™

The Official Foundation of the
American Urological Association

Finding out you have kidney cancer can be overwhelming. You may have many questions about your treatment options and what lies ahead. Being able to talk with your urologist about your preferences for treatment is important. Together, you can make the best decision for your care.

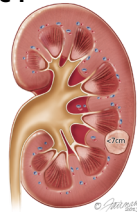
Treating kidney cancer depends on many things. Your exact diagnosis, general health and where the cancer is found are all a part of choosing the best treatment plan. The cancer's stage, grade and location will also help determine your care plan. You should ask many questions along the way to help you feel confident about your next steps.

KIDNEY CANCER TREATMENT AND SIDE EFFECTS

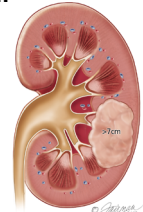
The goal of kidney cancer treatment is to protect the function of the kidney as much as possible. Surgery is often the main treatment. Depending on tumor size, there are also nonsurgical treatments available. Sometimes active surveillance is used. This is where you and your urologist monitor the tumor and only treat it if it grows. For kidney cancer that has spread to other parts of the body, surgery, targeted therapies, immunotherapy, clinical trials or a combination of these may be your best approach. These are decisions you and your urologist will make together. A few treatments options your urologist may suggest may be seen on the next page.

STAGES OF KIDNEY CANCER

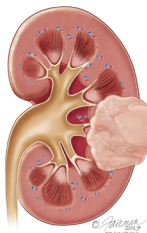
Stage I



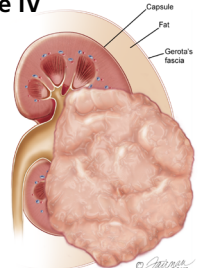
Stage II



Stage III



Stage IV



Stage I: At this stage, the tumor is up to 7 centimeters (cm) across and is only in the kidney.

Stage II: At stage II, the tumor is larger than 7 cm across, but still only in the kidney.

Stage III: At stage III, the tumor can be any size and may have spread to the tissue outside of the kidney. It could also have spread to nearby lymph nodes or into nearby large veins.

Stage IV: At stage IV, the cancer has spread outside of the kidney to lymph nodes or and/or other distant parts of the body such as the bones, liver or lungs.

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| TREATMENT | SIDE EFFECTS |
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| Surgery to remove the tumor can be successful. When tumors grow, surgery can also be used to remove the cancer in other areas of the body. Two types of kidney cancer surgery are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partial nephrectomy - removing part of the kidney• Radical nephrectomy - removing the entire kidney | Surgery carries a risk of bleeding and infection. Other less common side effects of surgery may include potential damage to other organs, urinary problems or failure of the second kidney. |
| Non-surgical methods may be used if surgery is not possible. These options can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cryoablation – freezing the tumor• Radiofrequency ablation – heating the tumor• Arterial embolization - plugging the blood vessels feeding the tumor | Non-surgical options have very few side effects; however, cancer recurrence is more common. |
| Adjuvant therapy is a treatment method used after surgery to help slow the cancer's growth or to prevent it from returning. | Side effects may include fatigue, rash, diarrhea and increased blood pressure. Skin changes such as redness, pain, swelling or blisters may also occur. |
| Other Options <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Targeted therapy uses drugs to “target” and treat cancer cells. These can shrink or slow the growth of cancer for a while, but not actually cure kidney cancer.• Cytokine therapy is an immunotherapy, which uses your body's immune system to help fight off or destroy cancer cells. | Side effects can vary depending on which care option you choose. Talk with your urologist to learn more. |

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR DOCTOR

- ☐ What are my treatment options?
- ☐ How quickly do we need to decide on a treatment plan?
- ☐ How long will treatment last? Where will it be done?
- ☐ Will surgery work for me and what are the chances it will help?
- ☐ What should I expect after surgery?
- ☐ Do you recommend adjuvant therapy?
- ☐ What targeted or immunotherapies do you recommend for me and why?
- ☐ Are there clinical trials I should consider?
- ☐ Can you tell me about support services that can help me during or after treatment?
- ☐ What is the chance my cancer will return?

ABOUT THE UROLOGY CARE FOUNDATION

The Urology Care Foundation is the world's leading urologic foundation – and the official foundation of the American

Urological Association. We provide information for those actively managing their urologic health and those ready to make health changes. Our information is based on the American Urological Association resources and is reviewed by medical experts.

To learn more, visit the Urology Care Foundation's website, **UrologyHealth.org/UrologicConditions** or go to **UrologyHealth.org/FindAUrologist** to find a doctor near you.

DISCLAIMER:

This information is not a tool for self-diagnosis or a substitute for professional medical advice. It is not to be used or relied on for that purpose. Please talk to your urologists or health care provider about your health concerns. Always talk to a health care provider before you start or stop any treatments, including medications.

For copies of printed materials about Kidney Cancer and other urologic conditions, visit **UrologyHealth.org/Order** or call 800-828-7866.

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