

Health Matters

What To Do If You Or A Loved One Is Diagnosed With A Brain Tumor

(NAPSA)—Hearing that you or someone you love has been diagnosed with a brain tumor is life-changing news. It is common for new patients to feel they have more questions than answers, and the one place many people with brain tumors turn to is The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston.

Here is some guidance for both patients and caregivers from Franco DeMonte, M.D., professor in MD Anderson's Department of Neurosurgery and specialist at the Brain and Spine Center.

Take A Deep Breath

According to DeMonte, it can be natural to feel frightened, disoriented and confused; however, he believes it is important to stay calm. He says that patients often report that they feel better once they take a few steps back, process what they have just heard and start to research their options.

Knowledge Is Power

Reliable information is key for patients. Established websites, such as the American Brain Tumor Association and the American Cancer Society, can provide you with information that can be ammunition in your battle with a brain tumor.

This applies not just to patients, but caregivers as well. "Caregivers see things from a different perspective, so it is important for them to be informed and learn as much as they can," DeMonte explains.

Get A Second Opinion

Ask your doctor if you have time for a second opinion because chances are, you do. "We encourage second opinions, because if you are the patient, you have to be comfortable with your decision," DeMonte says.



Franco DeMonte, M.D., provides personalized, compassionate care for brain tumor patients.

He also advises that as you talk with different doctors, it is important to ask the same questions so you can compare their answers. DeMonte suggests that you ask physicians about their experience with brain tumors, how often they see cases like yours, how soon treatment can begin and whether or not they work on a multidisciplinary team.

Evaluate Your Options

When it is time to make a decision, DeMonte thinks there are specific things to look for, such as patient volume and the types of brain tumors treated.

He also feels that finding a center with clinical research programs, support programs and brain tumor specialists (neurosurgeons, neuro-oncologists, neuro-radiation therapists and pathologists) can be a plus.

Stay Informed

DeMonte believes that patients should become their own advocates and ask for digital copies of all records, including MRI and CT scans.

More Information

For further facts on brain tumors, visit MDAnderson.org/Brain.