

Melanoma

Complete discussion guide

A printable set of questions to bring to appointments with your care team. Each section below is also available as its own one-page checklist.

Sections

1. What to Expect After a Melanoma Diagnosis
2. Understanding Your Melanoma Pathology Report
3. Breslow Depth Explained: How "Thickness" Affects Prognosis
4. Sentinel Lymph Node Biopsy: What It Means for Melanoma
5. What Does My Melanoma Stage Mean?
6. Melanoma Treatment Options
7. How to Find the Right Melanoma Specialist Near You
8. Melanoma Clinical Trials: Should You Consider One?

<https://www.beatingskincancer.com/melanoma>



What to Expect After a Melanoma Diagnosis

Melanoma

<https://www.beatingskincancer.com/melanoma/what-to-expect-after-diagnosis>

Appointment date

Doctor's name

☐ What stage is my melanoma, and how was that determined?

☐ Do I need a sentinel lymph node biopsy?

☐ Will I need additional treatment after surgery?

☐ How often should I have skin exams or imaging?

☐ What steps can I take to reduce my risk of recurrence?



Understanding Your Melanoma Pathology Report

Melanoma

<https://www.beatingskincancer.com/melanoma/pathology-report>

Appointment date

Doctor's name

- ☐ What is my Breslow depth, and is there ulceration?

- ☐ Are my margins clear, or will I need a re-excision?

- ☐ Do my results suggest I should consider a sentinel lymph node biopsy?

- ☐ Was any molecular testing done, and did it find any actionable mutations?

- ☐ Would a second pathology opinion be worthwhile in my case?



Breslow Depth Explained: How "Thickness" Affects Prognosis

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<https://www.beatingskincancer.com/melanoma/breslow-depth-explained>

Appointment date

Doctor's name

- ☐ What is my exact Breslow depth, and which T category does it place me in?

- ☐ Is there ulceration, and how does that affect my risk alongside the depth?

- ☐ What excision margin do you recommend based on my thickness?

- ☐ Given my depth, is a sentinel lymph node biopsy recommended, optional, or not indicated?

- ☐ Is my case close enough to a staging cutoff that a second pathology opinion would be worthwhile?



Sentinel Lymph Node Biopsy: What It Means for Melanoma

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<https://www.beatingskincancer.com/melanoma/sentinel-lymph-node-biopsy>

Appointment date

Doctor's name

☐ Do you recommend a sentinel lymph node biopsy for my melanoma? Why or why not?

☐ How will the results affect my treatment plan?

☐ What are the potential risks or side effects of the biopsy?

☐ How long will it take to get the results?

☐ If the biopsy is positive, what are the next steps?



What Does My Melanoma Stage Mean?

Melanoma

<https://www.beatingskincancer.com/melanoma/melanoma-stage-meaning>

Appointment date

Doctor's name

☐ What is my exact melanoma stage, and how was it determined?

☐ Does my pathology report mention Breslow depth or ulceration?

☐ Should I have a sentinel lymph node biopsy?

☐ Are there adjuvant or clinical trial options for my stage?

☐ How often should I return for skin and lymph node checks?



Melanoma Treatment Options

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<https://www.beatingskincancer.com/melanoma/melanoma-treatment-options>

Appointment date

Doctor's name

☐ What stage is my melanoma, and how does it affect my treatment options?

☐ Should I have a sentinel lymph node biopsy?

☐ Is my tumor being tested for BRAF or other mutations?

☐ Would immunotherapy or targeted therapy benefit me?

☐ What are the possible side effects, and how can they be managed?

☐ Are there any clinical trials I might qualify for?

☐ How often should I return for follow-up visits and skin checks?



How to Find the Right Melanoma Specialist Near You

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<https://www.beatingskincancer.com/melanoma/finding-a-melanoma-specialist>

Appointment date

Doctor's name

- ☐ Given my stage, should I be seen at a melanoma-specific center?

- ☐ Would you recommend a specific surgical oncologist or melanoma center for my case?

- ☐ Will my case be reviewed by a multidisciplinary team?

- ☐ Can you send my pathology report and slides if I want a second opinion?

- ☐ How will care be coordinated between you and any specialist I see?

Melanoma Clinical Trials: Should You Consider One?

Melanoma

<https://www.beatingskincancer.com/melanoma/melanoma-clinical-trials>

Appointment date

Doctor's name

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- ☐ Is there a clinical trial that fits my specific diagnosis and stage?

 - ☐ What phase is this trial in, and what does that mean for how well the treatment's safety and effectiveness are already understood?

 - ☐ What are the known and possible side effects, and how will they be monitored?

 - ☐ Will I still receive standard treatment, or does the trial replace it?

 - ☐ What extra tests, visits, or time commitments does participation require compared with standard care?

 - ☐ What happens if the trial treatment doesn't work for me, or if I want to stop participating?

 - ☐ Are travel, lodging, or costs of trial-related care covered, and what will my insurance still need to pay for?
