

# Questions to Ask...



## *about getting a second opinion*

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1. There is no one right choice of treatment. Each woman has to make the choice that's best for her at the time. The best choice is based on information.
2. **DO IT!** Take your original pathology slides/blocks, x-rays, notes on your health history, and the first doctor's report to a breast specialist.
3. If possible, select a doctor who is not associated with the same hospital as your first doctor. What you want is a fresh, objective view. A doctor who works at a teaching hospital may be connected to a medical school and may be more aware of new techniques and information.
4. Don't worry about the first doctor being upset/angry that you want a second opinion. Most doctors welcome such consultation. If the two doctors agree – good. If they disagree, go to a third. *Remember: it's in your best interest to get as much information as possible during this time.*
5. If the films are “suspicious,” you will need a biopsy to know for sure what is happening in your breast.

### HELPFUL HINTS

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1. Most insurance companies will cover a second opinion. Some require it. Check it out.
2. Take your notebook to every doctor's appointment.
3. Keep records of all your visits, including names, dates, the questions you asked and the answers you received.
4. Remember to take all your reports and films home from the doctor's office. Save yourself the hassle of having to return for them!
5. It takes many years for breast cancer to develop. The “extra” time it takes – even several weeks – to get a second opinion won't make a significant difference in the outcome of your case, but it may make a significant difference in the doctor, hospital and treatment you choose.
6. You can call the hospitals of your choice and ask for referrals to specialists connected with them.

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# Questions to Ask...



*about getting a second opinion (continued)*

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7. While there is no formal listing of breast specialists, there are physicians whose practices are concerned mainly with breast care.
8. If you don't have insurance coverage, try to get a second opinion from another physician at a no-cost clinic or from another private doctor who works with a sliding scale fee.

