

# Navigating next steps after a HER2-positive advanced GEA diagnosis

Information, questions, and space for notes to help you prepare for conversations with your care team after you received your biomarker test results.

## What happens after a diagnosis can feel overwhelming

It is okay to take things one step at a time. This guide can help you understand your diagnosis, consider what matters most to you, and prepare questions for your care team.

## What does my HER2-positive GEA diagnosis mean?

HER2-positive advanced gastroesophageal adenocarcinoma, or HER2+ advanced GEA, is a term used for certain cancers that begin in the esophagus, stomach, or the place where the esophagus and stomach meet, called the gastroesophageal junction (GEJ), that test positive for the HER2 protein. HER2, which stands for human epidermal growth factor receptor 2, is a protein involved in cell growth, and biomarker testing is used to identify whether your cancer expresses it. When testing finds high levels of this protein in cancer cells, the cancer is described as HER2-positive, or HER2+.

## Why does my HER2 status matter?

Knowing your HER2 status is a key part of understanding your cancer. It acts as a biomarker that helps your care team learn more about your specific cancer and discuss treatment options designed to target HER2+ cancer cells.

### THIS GUIDE DOES NOT REPLACE MEDICAL ADVICE

Every person and every cancer is different. Your care team can explain your test results and recommend an approach based on your diagnosis, overall health, needs, and treatment goals.

## Getting ready for the conversation

Understanding a few key terms can help you have a more effective conversation with your care team so you feel confident in your next steps. Here are a few words you may hear:

### BIOMARKER TESTING

Laboratory testing of a sample of your tumor for characteristics that may help your care team learn more about your cancer and plan treatment.

### HER2-POSITIVE (HER2+)

A test result showing that the cancer cells have high levels of the HER2 protein. This information may help your care team discuss treatments designed to target HER2.

### ADVANCED GEA

Gastroesophageal adenocarcinoma (GEA) that is locally advanced (when the tumor has grown through the wall of the stomach or esophagus into nearby tissues or regional lymph nodes, but it has not spread to distant parts of the body) or metastatic (when the tumor has spread and started growing in other parts of the body) at the time of diagnosis.

### TARGETED THERAPY

A treatment designed to act on a specific feature of cancer cells, such as a biomarker.

### CLINICAL TRIAL

A research study involving people that evaluates a medical approach, such as a treatment or test.

### FIRST-LINE TREATMENT

The first treatment given for advanced or metastatic cancer. It may include more than one medicine.

## Before an appointment, it's helpful to:



Write down your questions and mark the ones that matter most today.



Consider bringing someone you trust to listen, take notes, or ask questions.



Bring a list of the medicines, vitamins, and supplements you take.



Ask your care team to repeat or explain anything that is unclear.



Before you leave, confirm what happens next and who to contact with questions.



# What matters most to me

Sharing what matters to you can help your care team understand your priorities and consider how treatment may affect your day-to-day life. There is no wrong answer, and a few words are enough. Use the space below to jot down your thoughts before your visit.

## THE PEOPLE, ACTIVITIES, OR RESPONSIBILITIES THAT MATTER MOST TO ME ARE:

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## THE MOST IMPORTANT THING I WANT TO UNDERSTAND TODAY IS:

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# Understanding a HER2-positive advanced GEA diagnosis

## START WITH THE FULL PICTURE

You do not have to ask every question at once. Choose the questions that feel most useful today and save the others for a future visit.

## CAN YOU WALK ME THROUGH MY DIAGNOSIS, INCLUDING WHERE MY CANCER STARTED AND WHETHER IT HAS SPREAD?

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## WHAT DOES THE STAGE OF MY CANCER MEAN FOR ME?

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## WHAT DID MY HER2 TEST SHOW, AND WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR ME?

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## WERE ANY OTHER BIOMARKERS TESTED, AND HOW DO THOSE RESULTS AFFECT THE TREATMENT OPTIONS WE SHOULD DISCUSS?

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## CAN I HAVE A COPY OF MY PATHOLOGY AND BIOMARKER TEST REPORTS?

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# Discussing treatment and what to expect

HOW DOES MY HER2-POSITIVE DIAGNOSIS AFFECT THE TREATMENT OPTIONS WE SHOULD CONSIDER?

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WHAT HER2-TARGETED TREATMENTS MAY BE APPROPRIATE FOR ME?

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WHAT TREATMENT DO YOU RECOMMEND, AND WHY?

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**IF YOU DON'T RECOMMEND A HER2-TARGETED TREATMENT, CAN YOU EXPLAIN WHY?**

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**WHAT IS THE GOAL OF THE RECOMMENDED TREATMENT?**

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**WOULD MY TREATMENT INCLUDE A COMBINATION OF MEDICINES? WHAT IS THE ROLE OF EACH ONE?**

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## HOW AND WHEN WILL MY TREATMENT BE GIVEN?

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## HOW WILL WE KNOW WHETHER MY TREATMENT IS WORKING?

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## WHAT SIDE EFFECTS COULD OCCUR, AND WHICH ARE MOST COMMON OR MOST SERIOUS?

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**HOW CAN SIDE EFFECTS BE PREVENTED OR MANAGED? WHICH SYMPTOMS SHOULD I REPORT RIGHT AWAY?**

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**COULD TREATMENT AFFECT MY DAILY LIFE, INCLUDING EATING, ENERGY, WORK, OR CARING FOR OTHERS?**

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**WHO SHOULD I CONTACT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS OR EXPERIENCE SYMPTOMS?**

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**ARE THERE CLINICAL TRIALS THAT MAY BE APPROPRIATE FOR ME?**

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# Finding support as I prepare for treatment

**SHOULD I MEET WITH A DIETITIAN BEFORE STARTING TREATMENT?**

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**WHAT CAN I DO TO SUPPORT MY WELL-BEING AS I BEGIN TREATMENT?**

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**WHAT EMOTIONAL SUPPORT, CAREGIVER RESOURCES, OR SUPPORT GROUPS ARE AVAILABLE TO ME AND MY FAMILY?**

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**WHERE CAN I FIND RELIABLE INFORMATION ABOUT HER2-POSITIVE ADVANCED GEA AND MY TREATMENT OPTIONS?**

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## My next steps

## MY NEXT APPOINTMENT

## MY NEXT TEST OR SCAN

## WHO TO CONTACT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS

## MY NOTES AND FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS