First visit guide

We are here for you

We have processes in place to keep you safe and prevent the spread of infection.

Some services and amenities may be limited or closed. Learn more at mdanderson.org/coronavirus

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We are here for you
Quick Reference

Have an emergency or urgent medical question?
Call 911

MD Anderson website
mdanderson.org

askMDAnderson
877-632-6789
mdanderson.org/ask

Getting to and around MD Anderson
access.mdanderson.org

Personal health record
MyChart
Download the free mobile app in the App Store or Google Play store.
MyChart.mdanderson.org

Patient Advocacy
713-792-7776

Financial Clearance Center team
1-844-294-4322 or send a message using MyChart

One-on-one support for patients, caregivers and family members
800-345-6324
mdanderson.org/myCancerConnection

Reaching your center
Find a list of helpful phone numbers at mdanderson.org/helpfulnumbers
Welcome to The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center.

We are committed to meeting your needs. From medical knowledge to financial counseling or emotional support, we are here for you.

This guide outlines what to expect during your first visit with us. It covers:

- The four steps of your initial visit page 2
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If you are a pediatric patient or the parent of a pediatric patient, you will receive additional information about your care.

Throughout the guide, you can find helpful tips from people who have shared your experience. Look for the symbol to find questions you may want to ask your care team.

“Write down all of your questions. After my doctor went over everything, it was my turn to ask questions. Having them written down really helped.”

–Mariana Torrado, survivor
The four steps of your initial visit

Your first visit may take place over several days. This allows us to give you complete care. Typically the four steps of the first visit are:

1. Registration.
   A patient access representative meets with you to review insurance benefits and sign initial forms.

2. Screening tests.
   You will meet with a member of your health care team. You may need to complete medical tests before you see your doctor.

3. Meeting with your doctor.
   Your doctor and care team will review your test results and your medical history. Then, your doctor will perform a physical exam. With this information, your care team will develop and discuss a treatment plan that is unique to you, as needed.

What is my primary diagnosis? _____________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

What caused it? _________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Continue to ask questions at your visits. There is space throughout this guide for you to write notes.
4. Deciding on a treatment plan.

Your care team will discuss next steps with you. You may have choices to make about the type of treatment and where you want to receive your treatment.

What are my treatment options? __________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Will this treatment impact my daily activities? Ability to work? Diet? Exercise?
Sexual activity? __________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

What can I do now to prepare for treatment so that I can decrease the impact of side effects? __________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

What else can I do? Any lifestyle changes? Why is it important? ________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

What happens if a visit, test, treatment or hospital stay is denied by my insurance provider? ______________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Over the next few days, you will meet many MD Anderson employees. Some of these people will be part of your primary care team. A care team is made up of specialists from many different areas. Together they will review your test results and develop a treatment plan just for you.

As a patient at MD Anderson, you are an important part of your own health care team. We encourage you to actively participate in your care to achieve the best possible results. Feel free to ask your care team for information if you have questions.

Here is a list of care team roles and how each role may help you.

**Patient access staff**
Communicates with you about your records and insurance coverage. This person scheduled your first appointment.

**Attending physician**
You and your attending physician are responsible for all decisions about your care. You may meet with physicians from different specialties, too.

**Advanced practice provider**
Your advanced practice provider (APP) works closely with your doctor and is very involved in your care. They could be an advanced practice nurse or physician assistant.

*TIP: Write the names of your physician and APP in key contacts on page 32.*

**Nursing team**
You will have several nurses at MD Anderson including:

- Your clinical nurse
- A research nurse
- A medical assistant
- Other nurses with special training and skills
Roles on your care team

Additional people who may assist you include

**Case manager**
Provides information to your insurance company about what services you have received and why.

**Chaplain** 713-792-7184
Spiritual support is available to you and your family, of any denomination, 24 hours a day. The Chapel is located in the Main Building, Floor 1, near Café Anderson at our Texas Medical Center location. The Muslim Prayer Room is in the Main Building, Floor 3, near Elevator E, B3.4301. Spiritual support is available at all of our Houston-area locations both in person and through virtual visits.

**Dietitian** 713-792-2254 or 713-563-5167
Can help you with questions about what foods to eat during treatment and about weight gain or weight loss. Call to learn more and have a nutrition plan developed for you during treatment and recovery.

**Integrative Medicine practitioner**
Can help you incorporate complementary medicine into your care.

**Occupational or Physical Therapist**
Can help you achieve your best physical activity level and regain bodily function after treatment.

**Patient advocate** 713-792-7776 (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.), 713-792-7090 (after hours and weekends)
Assists with questions or concerns anytime. Your patient advocate will listen to your concerns, make sure you know your rights, and be a voice for you. A good resource when you are unsure where to go with questions.
Roles on your care team

**Pharmacist**
Provides information and answers questions about your medicines.

**Social worker 713-792-6195**
Can help you and your caregiver cope with your diagnosis and treatment plan. Individual and family counseling is available free of charge. They also provide information about community resources. Learn more at mdanderson.org/socialwork.

**Business Specialists**
If you receive treatment at MD Anderson, you may meet other specialists who can become part of your care team. They are available to assist you if needed.

**Patient Service Coordinator (PSC)**
Schedules appointments for returning patients. You can send them a question about your appointment using MyChart.

**Financial Clearance Center team 1-844-294-4322, or send a message using MyChart.**
Can help you with questions about your insurance coverage and pre-authorization of care.

**Patient Business Services representative 1-800-527-2318, or send a message using MyChart.**
This team can help you understand your bills.
Most members of your care team wear uniforms. To help you identify their role, here is a guide to care team uniforms at MD Anderson.
How to manage your care online with MyChart

“MyChart is an amazing tool. I can see my upcoming appointments at a glance, send a note to my care team or even request a prescription refill. I feel connected without having to be on campus.”

–Raphael Moffett, Ed.D., survivor

As a patient at MD Anderson, you take an active role in managing your care with MyChart, a secure website and mobile app. You may recognize MyChart if you use it to communicate with doctors at other hospitals.

With this website, you can

• Access your health information

• Send messages

• Find directions

• Request to schedule or reschedule appointments

• Review test results

• Complete questionnaires before you arrive for an appointment
How to manage your care online with MyChart

**Activation code:** If you do not already have an account, you will need an activation code to create one. Talk with a staff member to receive an activation code.

Also, you can call askMDAnderson for an activation code or to find answers to any questions you have about MyChart. Call 877-632-6789 to reach a health information specialist.

By updating your communication preferences in MyChart, you can choose how you want to hear from us. For example, if you opt in for text messages, we can send you text message appointment reminders.

To access your health record on your mobile device, download the free MyChart mobile app in the App Store or Google Play store. Look for the Get help using MyChart link on the MyChart.mdanderson.org login screen to find a MyChart fact sheet.

**Training on how to use the site and mobile app.**

askMDAnderson can help you with MyChart. Call 877-632-6789 to reach a health information specialist. They are open evenings, weekends and holidays.

**Free wireless access is available.** You can connect your device to Wi-Fi in most public places on the MDAGuest network. No password or payment is required.
Patient rights and responsibilities

Asking questions is the best way to ensure you have a voice when it comes to your care. I feel respected as a patient when my care team listens and addresses my concerns patiently and is available for additional questions.”

—Ivanna Kern, survivor

Your Rights

1. Care that is respectful, high-quality, considerate and dignified.
   - Ask all people involved in your care to introduce themselves, state their role and explain what they are going to do for you.
   - Expect quality treatment. This is a commitment to your safety and ongoing care.
   - You can decide who can visit you, including family, friends and others. You may have someone with you for emotional support.
   - Your age, race, color, national origin, ethnicity, religion, culture/cultural values, language, physical or mental disability, socioeconomic status, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity/expression will not impact your care.
   - You can request accommodations for your religious and other spiritual services.

2. Information that is understandable and complete, including treatment and care outcomes.
   - You will be told about your condition including the proposed treatment, other treatment options and the benefits and risks of each option.
   - You will be informed about your role in your own care.
   - The hospital will involve your family in your care, treatment and service decisions in accordance with your wishes and the law. You may decide who may (or may not) receive information about your care.
Patient rights and responsibilities

• The outcome of your care, including expected and unexpected outcomes, will be shared with you or your designated representative(s).

• You will be informed of any research, educational or training activities that may be part of your treatment. You can choose to participate or not participate in these activities.

MD Anderson provides interpreters, translators and other language assistance services free of charge. Request that Language Assistance be contacted for you.

3. Participation in decisions about treatments, benefits, risks and options.

• It is your right to have your family and/or physician told promptly if you are admitted to the hospital.

• You may decide whether you wish to be treated and by which method of treatment. You can refuse a diagnostic procedure or treatment.

• If you refuse a treatment, you will be informed of the impact this decision will have on your health.

• You may request, prior to treatment, a reasonable estimate of charges for your care.

• If you are a minor, your parent(s) or guardian(s) will be involved in all of your treatment planning decisions. If you are unable to make decisions about your care, MD Anderson will extend these same rights to your designated representative(s).

4. Consideration of personal beliefs and values.

• We respect your right to make a personal decision that is based on your beliefs and values, as well as on the available medical information.

• You, your family or your designated representative(s) will be involved in all ethical issues about your care.
Patient rights and responsibilities

- You may wish to think about these questions:
  - Do you have all the information you need to make a decision about your care?
  - In case you cannot speak for yourself, have you appointed someone to speak on your behalf through a Medical Power of Attorney? If not, have you informed us of who will speak on your behalf?

Ask to speak to Clinical Ethics to help address any of these concerns.

5. Prompt response to requests and needs.

- You have the right to considerate and respectful care.

- Should you need a service not provided by MD Anderson, you have the right to be assisted in transferring to another health care facility that can provide the needed service.

- You also have the right to examine your hospital bill and to have it explained to you.

6. Privacy and confidentiality in all matters.

- Case discussions, examinations and treatments are confidential and will be done in private by MD Anderson staff.

- Patient information is confidential and may not be given to third parties without your permission except as required by law. You or your legally designated representative(s) may access your medical record.

- You may request confidential status to protect your identity as a hospitalized patient.

- You may close the curtain around your bed or the room door when you want privacy.

- You may request to move to another room if you are unreasonably bothered by another patient or visitor. Every effort will be made to move you to a similar type of room.
7. Commitment to patient safety.

- You have the right to expect quality treatment that is committed to your safety and ongoing care.
- It is a priority to promote a safe and caring environment at MD Anderson.
- You have the authority to say “Stop, I have a concern” if you feel there is a safety issue.


- MD Anderson will provide an appropriate assessment to address and manage your pain.
- We will work with you to establish a goal for pain relief and to implement a plan to achieve that goal.


- You have the right to a Medical Power of Attorney. This lets you give one or more people the right to make medical decisions for you if you are unable to do so for yourself.
- You also have the right to complete a Living Will (Directive to Physicians and Family or Surrogates). This document tells how you want your medical care to be handled in case you are unable to say so for yourself.
- If you are in the hospital, you or your legally designated representative(s) may request the withholding of resuscitation (DNR), or the starting or ending of life-sustaining treatment.
- If you are an outpatient, you or your legally designated representative(s) may request that your physician prepare an Out-of-Hospital Do-Not-Resuscitate (DNR) order for you. Ask to speak with Social Work if you need information or assistance in completing a Medical Power of Attorney or other advance directives.
10. To be heard if problems, complaints or grievances arise.

- MD Anderson values open discussion. If you share a complaint or concern, it will not negatively change your care in any way.

- You have the right to make complaints or grievances regarding the quality of care or service you receive. If you have a concern, please do not hesitate to inform the MD Anderson staff involved. You may also speak with the manager in charge.

- Ask to speak with Patient Advocacy at MD Anderson if you feel your concern was not addressed well enough. MD Anderson’s goal is to address complaints at the time of complaint and grievances within 7 business days. If you have questions about the status of a complaint or grievance, contact your Patient Advocate at 713-792-7776.

- You also may call MD Anderson’s Institutional Compliance Hotline at 800-789-4448.

- You may contact the Texas Health and Human Services Commission or The Joint Commission whether or not you have first told MD Anderson about your concern.
  - Texas Health and Human Services Commission, 888-973-0022
    hfc.complaints@hhsc.state.tx.us
    Mailing address: Health and Human Services Commission, Complaint and Incident Intake, Mail Code E-249, P.O. Box 149030, Austin, TX 78714-9030
  - Office of Quality Monitoring for The Joint Commission, 800-994-6610
    patientsafetyreport@jointcommission.org

- Medicare beneficiaries may submit complaints regarding concerns of quality of care, coverage decisions, and premature discharge by contacting:
  - TMF Health Quality Institute, 800-725-9216
    Mailing address: Beneficiary Review Department, Barton Oaks Plaza Two, Suite 200, 901 MoPac Expressway South, Austin, TX 78745-5799
Your Responsibilities

1. **Provide complete medical information** Give accurate and complete information about your present health and medical history. This includes illness, hospital stays, medicines, advance directives and other health issues.

2. **Ask for clear explanations.** Ask questions until you understand your condition, treatment or role in your care.

3. **Make informed decisions.** You are responsible for the decisions you make about your care. The Learning Centers can provide you with helpful resources. You may be asked to give permission (consent) in writing for certain tests, procedures or surgical operations. Ask as many questions as you need to fully understand each document you are asked to sign.

4. **Understand.** Ask any member of your health care team to explain anything that you do not understand. It is important that you know your role in your care.

5. **Report changes.** Tell your health care team about any changes in your health. Be sure to tell them if you are unable to follow the treatment plan that you have decided on.

6. **Accept financial obligations.** Ask questions to be sure you understand your financial responsibilities. Pay or ask questions about your bills as soon as possible. You must provide complete and accurate third party payer and guarantor information. Any outstanding financial obligations related to services received must be paid promptly. The Financial Clearance Center (FCC) and Patient Business Services (PBS) are available to help you.
   - FCC helps with questions about insurance coverage. 713-792-4322 or 844-294-4322
   - PBS can help you understand your bills. 713-792-2991 or 800-527-2318

7. **Respect the privacy of others.** Be considerate of other patients by observing their right to privacy, limiting your visitors and maintaining a quiet atmosphere.
8. **Be courteous when taking photos or making recordings.** You may want to take pictures or make audio or video recordings during your time at MD Anderson. However, these activities may present some risks. A photo or video can distract your health care team or introduce germs into the room. Do not include other patients or MD Anderson employees without their permission. All patients and employees have the right to request that you stop. Our employees have the right to leave an area until unpermitted recording ends, as long as it does not impact your safety.

9. **Treat others with consideration and respect.** Everyone must treat one another with dignity and respect, regardless of age, race, color, national origin, ethnicity, religion, culture/cultural values, language, physical or mental disability, socioeconomic status, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.

10. **Follow hospital rules and regulations.** Everyone must follow the hospital rules and regulations.

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Read a copy of your rights and responsibilities online at mdanderson.org/patientadvocacy

What to expect from us as your partner in care

When you choose MD Anderson, you join a community of more than 22,000 cancer-fighting professionals and countless survivors, volunteers, donors and more.

We are dedicated to meeting your needs related to cancer screening, prevention, treatment and beyond.

If you and your care team decide to begin treatment, you may need to return for radiation, chemotherapy, surgery or other forms of treatment.

Most of your appointments will be as an outpatient. This means you will visit one of our care centers and not be admitted to the hospital.

MD Anderson provides care at several locations throughout Houston. Let your care team know which locations are most convenient for you.

Our locations:

- Texas Medical Center
- League City
- Sugar Land
- West Houston
- The Woodlands
- Bellaire Diagnostic Imaging (imaging and blood work)
- West Houston Diagnostic Imaging (imaging and blood work)
- The Women’s Hospital of Texas (surgery)

Learn more about our locations at mdanderson.org/locations
Tips for getting around

We use landmarks, signs and maps to help you find your way. Ask an MD Anderson employee wearing a badge or a blue-jacket volunteer if you need help getting around.

Inside our Texas Medical Center buildings follow the pathway marked by blue carpet stripes to the landmark closest to your destination. Visitors traveling between Main Building and Mays Clinic can ride shuttle carts on the skybridge for free.

Financial clearance is worth the wait

Health care is complicated, and so is insurance.

You can avoid getting unexpected bills by having authorization from your insurance company before a scan, test or treatment. That is why you may be asked to wait while your insurance company pre-authorizes a last-minute service. While we ask for feedback from your insurance company as soon as possible, reviews may not be immediate.

We understand this can be frustrating and inconvenient, especially for those with a tight travel schedule. However, this important step can influence future coverage decisions by your insurance company. If you have questions about your coverage, speak to the Financial Clearance Center team at 1-844-294-4322.

You can find more information at mdanderson.org/insuranceandbilling
Some treatments, such as a stem cell transplant or a surgery, require us to monitor your progress or recovery day and night. For this, we will admit you to the hospital. You will receive the guide to our hospital if you are admitted as an inpatient.

Treatments may take days or weeks at a time.

Here are questions to consider asking your care team:

What’s the problem? _________________________________________________________________

What is the goal of the treatment? Will it cure me, help me live longer or help with my symptoms? ______________________________________________________________________

Why are you prescribing this treatment plan and what are the chances it will work? ______________________________________________________________________

What are the short- and long-term side effects of this treatment? ___________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________
You may be eligible to participate in a research study called a clinical trial. This is how care teams learn more about cancers, how to treat them and how to prevent them.

Talk with your attending physician about your interest and eligibility for clinical trials. Read more at mdanderson.org/clinicaltrials.

For questions about the costs of clinical studies, talk to a Financial Clearance Center counselor in your center or call 1-844-294-4322.
Preventing medical identity theft

Medical identity theft occurs when an individual uses another person’s information, without the person’s knowledge or consent, to obtain medical services or goods.

To protect your personal information and reduce the risk of medical identity theft, you will be asked to provide photo identification during our registration process. We will ask permission to take your picture and place it into our electronic health record. Your picture will be used to confirm your identity during future visits.

To help protect your medical identity, we recommend the following:

- Do not leave your medical benefits or prescription drug cards unattended in a purse, locker or desk. Guard your health insurance card and number as carefully as you would a credit card or bank account number.

- Never give out your financial, health or insurance information to telemarketers, unsolicited salespeople or strangers.

- Always check the “Explanation of Benefits” (EOB) notices that your insurance company sends you. The EOB should reflect the services you actually received. If your EOB lists services that were never performed, incorrect dates of treatment or services, prescriptions that were never ordered or medical equipment or services that were not received, notify your provider and your health insurance plan immediately.

- If you do not receive an EOB for the medical care provided, call your insurance plan and ask if they have the right address. Medical identity thieves may arrange to have EOBs for the services they’ve received sent to an address that isn’t yours.

- Monitor your credit report to ensure that you have not been reported to a credit agency for failing to pay a debt that isn’t yours.

- Handle your health and insurance records securely. Ensure that all of your computing devices, including laptops, desktops, and handheld computers, have passwords or other security features if they contain sensitive health or financial information.

If you suspect you are a victim of medical identity theft, please contact Patient Advocacy at 713-792-7776.
Where you can find more answers

“Save the phone numbers to askMDAnderson and your center’s main number in your phone. That way you don’t have to search for it when you have a question.”

–Allison Rosen, survivor

Your questions deserve answers.

There are several ways you can access your care team and MD Anderson staff to get information or help.

1. You can message your care team members, Patient Services Coordinator, Patient Advocate, Ask the Library or Patient Business Services in MyChart.

2. You can call your center (also called a home center) to reach your care team or reschedule an appointment. Be sure to call your center line. Write your center number in key contacts on page 32.

Your care team may be able to respond more quickly to a MyChart message than returning a phone call. Whether you send a message or call, we will respond to you as quickly as possible during weekday business hours. However, please call 911 if you have an emergency or urgent medical question.

If you have a question about MD Anderson that is not about your clinical care, you can call askMDAnderson. Call 877-632-6789 and a health information specialist will help you find answers.

Please call 911

if you have an emergency or urgent medical question.
Here are some tips for patients and caregivers:

1. **You are not alone.** Talk to other patients and caregivers while waiting for appointments and treatments. For one-on-one support, check out myCancerConnection. It is a cancer support community of trained survivor and caregiver volunteers. Get connected by sending the myCancerConnection team a message on MyChart. Learn more at [mdanderson.org/myCancerConnection](http://mdanderson.org/myCancerConnection).

2. **Take notes to help you remember information shared during appointments.** Use MyChart to help manage your care online and review visit notes after appointments.

3. **To help you find accurate information online,** The Learning Center has created [recommended resource guides](http://mdandersontlc.libguides.com/home) on our website. Each resource covers a topic and lists links to reputable websites. Some resources are disease-specific, while others cover topics like pain management, nutrition or financial support. Visit [http://mdandersontlc.libguides.com/home](http://mdandersontlc.libguides.com/home)

“Take care of yourself so you can provide support as it’s needed.”

–Audrie Luna, caregiver
What to do before you leave

Set up your MyChart account

This secure, personalized website helps you take an active role in managing your care. With MyChart you can access your health record, view test results and send messages to your care team.

If you do not already have an account, call askMDAnderson at 1-877-632-6789 to request an activation code.

You’ve got things to say. We’re listening.

After your visit, you will get an email from MD Anderson with a link to a survey. Fill it out to tell us about your experience. We read your comments and use your feedback to help us improve the care and services we provide.

Learn more at mdanderson.org/patientfeedback.
MD Anderson complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or gender. MD Anderson does not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or gender.

MD Anderson provides:

- Free aids and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with us, such as:
  - American Sign Language interpreters and text telephone (TDD) can be provided for hearing-impaired patients.
  - Written information in other formats (large print, audio, accessible electronic formats, other formats)

- Free language services to people whose primary language is not English, such as:
  - Qualified interpreters
  - Information written in other languages

If you need any of these services, contact your care team or center to request Language Assistance.

If you believe that MD Anderson has failed to provide these services or discriminated in another way on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or gender, you can file a grievance with Patient Advocacy at 713-792-7776.

You can file a grievance in person or by mail, fax, or email. If you need help filing a grievance, contact Patient Advocacy. You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights electronically through the Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf, or by mail or phone at: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights, 200 Independence Avenue SW., Room 509F, HHH Building, Washington, DC 20201, 1-800-368-1019, 800-537-7697 (TDD). Complaint forms are available at http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html.

This information is available in other languages by request.
My key contacts

My center: ________________________________________________________________

Center phone number: ________________________________________________________

Attending physician: ___________________________________________________________

Advanced practice provider: ___________________________________________________
First visit guide

We are here for you

We have processes in place to keep you safe and prevent the spread of infection.

Some services and amenities may be limited or closed. Learn more at mdanderson.org/coronavirus