*Get Answers to Frequently Asked Questions about Astera Cancer Care*

***What do I need to bring to my first appointment?***

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***What will occur during my initial visit?***

Your physician consultation will generally consist of a physical examination, discussion of medical history and diagnosis, probable plan of care, as well as time for any questions you may have. Initial consultations generally last about an hour to an hour and a half. It is necessary to have your medical records forwarded to our office in advance of your appointment so your Astera Cancer Care physician may review them prior to your visit.

***How do I know if Astera Cancer Care accepts my insurance?***

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***Will I have any testing done while I’m in the office?***

Your physician may order some Laboratory testing (blood work) upon the completion of your consultation. This may be completed in our Labs. Other diagnostic tests, such as scans or x-rays, may be ordered and scheduled for a later date at the appropriate location. These diagnostic tests are not completed in our offices.

***Will I start chemotherapy treatment the same day as my consultation?***

Chemotherapy treatment will not begin the same day as your consultation. Chemotherapy often requires additional testing such as scans and biopsies before the treatment begins. It is also necessary to have your health insurance company authorize chemotherapy in advance (this generally takes approximately one week) to ensure that your treatment will be covered by insurance. The timing of initial chemotherapy treatments varies on a case by case basis. After your physician has obtained any required test results and your insurance company has authorized the treatment, you will receive a call from the Astera Scheduling Coordinator to schedule your treatment. You will begin with a detailed one-on-one chemotherapy education session with one of our Advanced Practice Providers. This session will provide you with information about your specific treatment and allow you to ask any questions you may have.

***Where will I receive chemotherapy treatment?***

Many of our patients receive chemotherapy here in our offices. Our oncology nurses are trained in the administration of the latest chemotherapy treatments. Occasionally, due to insurance reasons, we will schedule our patients for their treatment on an out-patient basis at one of the hospitals where our physicians have privileges.

***I need to see a hematologist, and I understand RCCA physicians treat not only oncology (cancer) patients, but also hematology (blood) disorders. Can you please explain?***

Our physicians have extensive knowledge and experience in the diagnosis and treatment of diseases of the blood, ranging from anemia to clotting problems. We treat many hematology patients with non-cancerous blood disorders. (It is very common for oncologists to also practice hematology, as many of the side effects of chemotherapy are blood related, for example, anemia and neutropenia.)

***What hospitals are Astera’s providers affiliated with?***

We are affiliated with the following New Jersey hospitals: JFK Medical Center in Edison; Robert Wood Johnson University Hospitals in Hamilton, New Brunswick and Somerset; and Saint Peter’s University Hospital in New Brunswick. We are not able to treat patients at other hospitals, as we are not on staff.

***I am aware that I will require chemotherapy treatment and am concerned about the copayments. Are there any assistance programs available?***

In the event that you will be receiving chemotherapy treatments, our financial counselors may contact you prior to your first treatment to discuss assistance programs that are available. In cases of need, we will discuss your options regarding assistance from several organizations.

***How do I obtain a copy of my health information/medical records?***

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If you have any additional questions, or to schedule an appointment, call 732-724-1727. You can also request an appointment using our [easy online form](https://centraljerseyr.wpengine.com/contact-us/request-an-appointment/).