



# spotlight on health

## Get To Know The “Personal” Side Of Cancer

(NAPSA)—We all know what cancer is. We have all been touched by it in some way—our families; our friends; our children; or ourselves. But a missing piece of the story is understanding how cancer care is changing. If you or a loved one has cancer, then you likely have lots of questions. Where can you learn more about your cancer? Is there new research you should know about?

We have an idea what cancer is and have seen what it can do, but now the language of cancer care is shifting.

You may be familiar with words like “personalized medicine” or “biomarker.” If not, you are not alone. A new survey found that three in four patients with a type of cancer that has a known biomarker have not talked to their doctor about it.\* And six out of 10 people did not know what the word “biomarker” means.<sup>1</sup>

“In simple terms, personalized medicine means that doctors use information about some cancer tumors’ genes or proteins to try to find targeted ways to treat it. Biomarkers can tell us a lot about how a person’s cancer may behave and how it might respond to a specific treatment,” said Dr. Charles Balch, past president of the Society of Surgical Oncology. “Knowing this helps us select from available treatment options and choose one that is more likely to work. With this approach, we can help target the right treatment, at the right time, for the right patient.



**Ask your oncologist about biomarkers and whether testing is right for you.**

People should talk to their doctor to see if there is a biomarker test for their type of cancer.”

Do you need help having a more informed talk with your doctor? You can learn more by going to the website [www.CancerItsPersonal.com](http://www.CancerItsPersonal.com). This website is part of a program called “Cancer: It’s Personal.”

Here are some quick tips to get you started:

**1. Get to know the language of cancer care:** On the website, you can find a list of cancer terms your doctor may use, such as “targeted therapy.” You may also want to keep your own list of words you are not familiar with so you can talk to your doctor about them.

**2. Make a list of questions:** It may be helpful to write out everything you want to know about your cancer. Then, when you visit your doctor, you know where to start the conversation. [www.CancerItsPersonal.com](http://www.CancerItsPersonal.com) offers a guide with questions and

tips to talk to your doctor about biomarker tests and personalized medicine.

**3. Ask your doctor if a biomarker test is right for you:** You can start by learning more about biomarkers for different tumor types at [www.CancerItsPersonal.com](http://www.CancerItsPersonal.com). That way, you can see if there might be a test for your type of cancer.

---

**“Cancer: It’s Personal is a program, sponsored by Pfizer Oncology, that offers resources to help people with cancer and their loved ones speak with their doctors about personalized medicine and biomarkers. Learn more about personalized medicine and biomarker testing at [www.CancerItsPersonal.com](http://www.CancerItsPersonal.com).**

---

### **\*About the Survey**

The “Cancer: It’s Personal” survey, sponsored by Pfizer Oncology, surveyed people with cancer and their caregivers to explore their awareness of personalized medicine in cancer and biomarker testing.

A national representative sample of 500 people with cancer and 300 caregivers over the age of 18 were invited via e-mail to participate in a 10-minute self-administered online survey. The surveys were given between February 3 and February 18, 2011.

The study was conducted by TNS Global Market Research, part of Kantar.