

# Getting a Second Opinion

## How to get a second opinion at Kaiser Permanente

When you're facing a tough health care decision, you may have a hard time knowing what to do. Is surgery the answer? Is that test the right choice? Is it best to get treatment, or watch and wait? To answer the big questions, it's a good idea to talk to more than one doctor. That is called getting a second opinion.

### When is a second opinion helpful?

For everyday health care you probably don't need a second opinion. But a second opinion may be a good idea if:

- You are decided about a costly or risky test or treatment, like surgery
- You are not clear about how well a test or treatment may work
- You need more information about your options
- You are unsure about a diagnosis

### How do you get a second opinion?

Ask your doctor for the name of another expert within Kaiser Permanente. Explain that this is how you like to make big medical decisions. Don't worry about offending your doctor. Second opinions are expected.

### When getting a second opinion at Kaiser Permanente, follow these steps:

1. Talk to your doctor about getting a second opinion. Write down any questions you may have for the second doctor. Consider using [one of our resources](#) to help make the most out of your appointments including questions to discuss with your doctor.
2. Schedule a visit with the second doctor.\*
3. The second doctor will include the second opinion in your medical record. This keeps all your medical information in one place. Email your primary doctor, the one who manages all your care to discuss the second opinion results and a care plan.

### Receive a second opinion from an appropriately qualified medical practitioner.

If you want a second opinion, you can either ask your Plan Physician to help you arrange for one, or you can make an appointment with another Plan Physician. Kaiser Foundation Health Plan, Inc. will cover a second opinion consultation from a Non-Kaiser Permanente Medical Group Physician only if the care has been preauthorized by a Kaiser Permanente Medical Group. While it is your right to consult with a physician outside the Kaiser Permanente Medical Care Program, without prior authorization you will be responsible for any costs you incur.



For more information about second opinions, our services and resources, please contact our Member Service Contact Center at **1-800-464-4000** or **1-800-777-1370 (TTY)** or visit the Member Services Department at your local Medical facility.

\*If seen by a doctor outside of Kaiser Permanente, you will need to ensure your medical records are released in advance of your appointment.