



Finding Your Neurosurgeon

The most important step in planning for brain surgery is finding a neurosurgeon that makes you feel comfortable. It will help to have confidence in their ability to do this procedure successfully. If you have time to plan for brain surgery here are some tips.

Where to begin?

- Ask your existing medical provider for trusted neurosurgeon referrals
- Join a group of people online who have this condition and ask for their recommendations (Facebook has a handful of groups)
- Research online for the top neurosurgeons in your area. If willing to travel, search for top ranked neurosurgeons in the country. Read about their area of expertise, search their review pages and affiliations, look at how long they have practiced, what schools they attended, and review the facility in which they work.
- Schedule an appointment with at least 2 doctors, preferably 3 or 4 of them. This person will drill into your head, it is good to have options!
- If the doctor has a long wait list, schedule the 1st available appointment and call the office a few times a week to ask for any cancellations. Quite often you can get in sooner, cancellations are very common.

What do I ask at my appointment?

- What is the doctor's plan of action for removal or treatment? What does that look like? How much hair shaving will take place, how large will the incision be, and will staples, stitches, or glue be used for the incision? Is radiation needed?
- What is the timeline in which to schedule the surgery?
- What are the risk-factors? Can you do things to help lesson those risk factors?
- What's the estimated recovery time and return to work time-frame?
- When can you drive, exercise, be intimate, be left alone?
- What medications will you need post surgery/for how long? Any side-effects?
- What's the aftercare plan? Follow-up appointments, MRI's, therapy, etc.
- Overall risk versus benefit? If you don't have surgery what can happen?
- How long will the surgery be? How many nights in hospital?
- What's the doctor's professional opinion for best/worst case scenario?
- Why did Dr. _____ become a brain surgeon?
- Does your insurance cover this doctor/ facility? If not how much will it cost?

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