

## **GETTING A SECOND OPINION WITHOUT LEAVING HOME**

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You can obtain copies of your medical records and scans, and mail them to almost any doctor in the world to obtain a 2<sup>nd</sup> opinion.

The following is a step by step approach for obtaining 2<sup>nd</sup> opinions on ACC treatments from doctors and medical experts from anywhere in the world where it is physically and/or economically unfeasible for you to personally travel to accomplish this. It is suggested that once you have identified a particular doctor for a second opinion, that you contact their office by phone to verify their willingness to do a 2<sup>nd</sup> opinion, and you can find out their preferred mailing address and procedure for sending them information, and clarify what records they want you to include. This could include specific procedure documents, reports and CD's, any forms they may want you to complete, and the proper contact name and mailing address for where you will send the information.

### **Step #1:**

Gather all your relevant medical records including printed medical documents from surgeries, biopsies, pathology studies, and radiation treatments. This is a very good thing to do for future medical consults and decisions besides getting a 2<sup>nd</sup> opinion. Ask your medical records facility to copy your MRI, CT, PET, or any other scan to a CD-ROM disc then have the CDs copied at home on your computer with a CD burner or by a friend or a computer shop like Wal-Mart.

### **TIPS FOR REQUESTING YOUR SCANS FROM YOUR MEDICAL DOCTOR/FACILITY**

Contact all of the medical facilities and/or doctors who have diagnosed and prescribed treatment for your ACC and request the following:

1. A copy on CD of your MRI, CT, PET or any other scan you have had performed during your diagnosis or previous surgery. If multiple scans have been taken, request all of them and make sure they are dated or labeled.
2. If you have personally requested and received copies of these scans in the past, either duplicate the CD's on your computer or take them to professional and have duplicates made for all of the places you will be sending your information for a 2<sup>nd</sup> opinion. **DO NOT PART WITH YOUR "LAST" COPY OF ANY SCAN YOU OWN.**
3. Label each CD copy with your NAME, DATE, TYPE OF SCAN AND MEDICAL FACILITY
4. Some facilities will request the name and address for the physician where you will be sending copies of your records. Have that information available.

### **Step #2**

Provide the following information to the medical doctor or facility where you are seeking an opinion. The exact documents or CD's to send can vary depending upon many factors:

1. Write a cover letter briefly explaining your condition, surgical outcome and reason for asking this doctor for his/her opinion (see example letter below) Include your NAME, ADDRESS, PHONE# AND E-MAIL ADDRESS
2. Include with your letter a complete set of relevant medical scans on CD

3. In addition to medical scans, provide the doctor with written or scanned copies of all medical reports on surgery, pathology or radiation associated with your prior medical procedures or evaluations.
4. These documents go by several names depending on the facility and this is not a complete list:
  - a. Surgical / Operative Report
  - b. Surgical Pathology Report
  - c. Radiology Report
  - d. Tumor Board Report
  - e. Radiation treatment Report
  - f. Physical Exam Report

Example of a medical cover letter to send to a consulting physician:

*Dear Dr. XXXX YYYY*

*I am a 46 year old female diagnosed with ACC of the skull base on 20 November, 2010.*

*Enclosed are my MRI and CT scans on CD-ROM and other relevant medical records.*

*(NOTE: At this point you would insert why you are writing to this physician and tell them specifically why you are requesting feedback based upon their expertise. For example you may say something like "Given my current condition I am wondering if I should consider having X procedure or X and Y procedure, or if you would recommend some other option", or "The reason I am requesting your opinion is to verify my ENT's recommendation that I should only consider photon radiation in conjunction with low dose chemotherapy as the next step in the treatment of my ACC..." or whatever your reason is for wanting another opinion.*

*Please review this information and email your opinion to me at: my email [address@yahoo.com](mailto:address@yahoo.com) or via US postal to my mailing address at: \_\_\_\_\_*

*I have enclosed my biopsy report and medical statement from my ENT.*

*Your prompt response back to me is most appreciated.*

*Sincerely,  
Molly Medium*

*ACC Patient in Oklahoma*

Tips and suggestions for locating physicians:

- Refer to the ACCOI / ACCRF physicians list at <http://www.accoi.org/treatments/acc-physicians-list/> for the current list of physicians with knowledge and experience treating ACC.
- Ask members of the ACCOI Online Support group for any suggestions they would have for a physician who has knowledge of the type of issues you are addressing.
- Locate a medical facility website on the internet for address information of Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) physicians, radiation oncologist (administers radiation) or medical oncologist (administers chemotherapy and targeted drugs)
- When doctors receive your package of information they will ordinarily give their opinion via e-mail for free.

Most Medical Center Websites have contact information and addresses of ENT physicians and radiation oncologists.