



ACOUSTICNEUROMA
ASSOCIATION

Newly Diagnosed? Tips to Navigate the Road Ahead

The initial diagnosis of acoustic neuroma is overwhelming. Here are some insights and perspectives to help you understand your next steps.

Take advantage of the ANA's educational resources. Our *Newly Diagnosed Handbook* is a great starting point providing an overview of acoustic neuroma to help you navigate an overwhelming amount of information related to diagnosis and treatment. Additional handbooks are available on a variety of acoustic neuroma topics. View webinars and videos on our website using our search tools to find specific topics of interest.

Your doctors may ask for additional tests. By now, you've most likely had an MRI to confirm acoustic neuroma diagnosis and an audiogram to evaluate your hearing. Additional tests such as an auditory brainstem response (ABR), balance/vestibular testing, or genetic testing may be ordered for you depending on your situation and what treatment you decide to pursue.

Bring a list of questions to ask your doctors. Many people find it helpful to create a list of questions prior to appointments. Information and details can be overwhelming - take notes, have a friend or family member accompany you or use your cellphone's voice recorder to help recall information. Download and print the lists of questions available on the ANA website. Your provider may also ask you to submit all your test results prior to your appointment, so that they can review all your information prior to your consultation.

Get more than one opinion from experienced treatment centers. Treatment requires an experienced and specialized multidisciplinary team so you should seek opinions with this in mind for a patient-centered, individualized approach to care. Many providers will do remote consults and you can contact individual centers for more information about this option. The ANA's healthcare website listing is a great resource to help you begin your search for providers.

Do your homework and thoughtfully consider your options. The size of your tumor, the location of it, your age, your symptoms, your hearing and your overall health play a role in making a treatment decision. Sometimes deciding a course of treatment can be very difficult, especially if you have multiple options available to you. There are benefits and risks to all treatment options.

Have a support system. Think about the people in your life that will be supportive and specific ways they can help. You are not alone and we encourage you to attend ANA support group meetings and make connections through our Peer Mentor Program. Visit the ANA's Discussion Forum for online support.

This can be an emotional time. People experience a wide range of feelings about acoustic neuroma. The way you feel today may be different than the way you feel tomorrow. Our booklet, *Understanding Emotional, Cognitive and Behavioral Changes* provides information and strategies to help you navigate emotions and seek out helpful resources.

Prepare and prioritize side effect management. Patients may not be prepared for side effects or ways to manage them. It is helpful to get information about potential side effects, what to expect, ways to manage them and when to call your doctor.

Everyone's journey is different. We help these tips, along with management from your healthcare team, will be helpful for you.

August 2022