

Chemotherapy

Your doctor has told you that you need chemotherapy. You may be worried about how the chemo will make you feel. You are not alone. Many people worry about this.

People experience the side effects from chemotherapy differently. Here are some tips to help you manage your side effects:

- Take your medications as prescribed.
- Make a list of any questions you have and write down how you felt after your treatment.
- Talk with your nurse or doctor about how you felt and ask your questions. They can make changes for the next treatment to make it better.

What is chemotherapy?

Chemotherapy is also called chemo. It is medicine used to treat cancer. Chemotherapy may be given alone. It can also help treatments like surgery or radiation work better.

How does chemotherapy work?

Chemotherapy can:

- stop cells from growing and dividing
- stop cancer cells from travelling to other areas of the body
- slow the growth of cancer cells
- shrink cancer before surgery

Chemotherapy works on the whole body so healthy cells can be affected too. This is why you may have side effects. Healthy cells will repair themselves with time.

Side Effects of Chemotherapy may include:

nausea and vomiting *	fatigue *	infection
mouth sores *	hair loss	diarrhea *
appetite changes *	fertility issues	constipation *

* Indicates translated information is available

Remember: You may or may not get some of the side effects from chemotherapy.

How is chemotherapy given?

Chemo is most often given by a needle into a vein (IV or intravenous). When the chemo treatment is finished the needle is removed. Sometimes a thin tube is inserted into a vein and is left in for all your treatments. This is called a PICC or PORT. Chemo is also given by:

- mouth (pill or liquid)
- needle into a muscle (injection)
- rubbing onto the skin (cream)

How often will I get chemotherapy?

Chemo treatments are often called cycles. The number of treatments or cycles given depends on each person's cancer. Treatments may be given:

- daily, weekly or monthly
- continuously by a pump that you wear home

How long does chemo take to give?

Chemo treatments can take a few minutes, several hours or a few days.

Where will I get chemotherapy?

Chemo is usually given in the cancer clinic and you go home the same day. Some treatments are only given in a hospital and you need to stay overnight or longer.