

- Exercise. Many people find that light exercise helps them feel better. There are many ways for you to exercise, such as walking, riding a bike, and doing yoga. Talk with your doctor or nurse about ways you can exercise.
- Talk with others. Talk about your feelings with someone you trust. Choose someone who can focus on you, such as a close friend, family member, nurse, or social worker. You may also find it helpful to talk with someone else who is getting chemotherapy.
- Join a support group. Cancer support groups provide support for people with cancer. These groups allow you to meet others with the same problems. You will have a chance to talk about your feelings and listen to other people talk about theirs. You can find out how others cope with cancer, chemotherapy, and side effects. Your doctor, nurse, or social worker may know about support groups near where you live. Some support groups also meet online (over the Internet), which can be helpful if you cannot travel.

Talk to your doctor or nurse about things that worry or upset you. You may want to ask about seeing a counselor. Your doctor may also suggest that you take medication if you find it very hard to cope with your feelings

Signs of Infection

Be careful about signs of infection. Even if you take extra care, it is possible to get an infection and you could have some of the following symptoms-

- Fever
- Chills
- Sweating, especially at night
- Loose bowels
- Burning feeling while urinating
- Severe cough or sore throat
- Mouth ulcers

If any symptoms of infection appear, report them to your doctor or nurse right away. Do not use aspirin or any other medicine to reduce fever unless you check with your doctor.

Chemotherapy and your diet

By eating well, you give yourself the best possible chance at coping with both the disease and your therapy. You may feel loss of appetite while on Chemotherapy but taking small and frequent meals will help you in maintaining nutrition/ stamina. Doctors, nurses and researchers are finding that patients who have a balanced diet during treatment are better able to withstand its side effects. Eating well means choosing a variety of foods that contain vitamins, minerals, protein and other elements needed to keep the body working normally. For further diet related queries you can contact your treating doctor.



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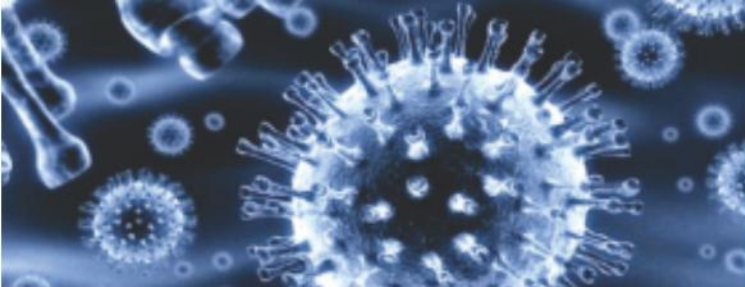
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CIMS CHEMOTHERAPY





What is Chemotherapy?

Chemotherapy (also called chemo) is a type of cancer treatment that uses drugs to destroy cancer cells.

What does chemotherapy do?

Depending on your type of cancer and how advanced it is, chemotherapy can:

- Cure cancer—when chemotherapy destroys cancer cells to the point that your doctor can no longer detect them in your body and they will not grow back.
- Control cancer—when chemotherapy keeps cancer from spreading, slows its growth, or destroys cancer cells that have spread to other parts of your body for a certain period of time.
- Ease cancer symptoms (also called palliative care)—when chemotherapy shrinks tumors that are causing pain or pressure for a certain period of time.

How is Chemotherapy given?

The choice of anticancer drugs for each patient depends on the type and location of the cancer, its stage of development, how it affects normal body functions, and the general health of the patient. You may be treated with one drug or several. The chemotherapy may be given in several ways.

Intravenous Chemotherapy

When drugs are injected into a vein (IV), they get to work in the blood very rapidly. An IV injection usually feels like administration of IV Fluids. Some drugs may cause you discomfort, others cause none at all. Any unpleasant sensation, however, will be temporary in most cases. Certain drugs, if they seep out of the vein, may cause redness and scarring of the tissue. If you feel any pain with an IV treatment, report it to your doctor or nurse right away.

Intramuscular Chemotherapy

The muscles in your thigh and buttocks are the most common areas for giving intramuscular chemotherapy. Drugs administered this way are absorbed into the blood more slowly than intravenous chemotherapy. This means that the effects can last longer than intravenous chemotherapy.

Oral Chemotherapy

You may have chemotherapy tablets or capsules to take at home. They may be all the treatment you need or you may have intravenous drugs as well. The medical or nursing staff will tell you

- When to take the tablets or capsules
- How often to take them
- Whether or not to take them with food
- How long before or after food you should take them
- Whether there is anything you shouldn't eat while you are taking them, for example you shouldn't eat grapefruit with some drugs

Other modes of Chemotherapy:-

- The layer of fat just under the skin – subcutaneous
- An artery – intra arterial
- The fluid around your spine or brain – intrathecally
- A body cavity – intracavitary, such as the bladder, chest cavity, or tummy (abdominal cavity)
- The space between the membranes that cover the lungs – intrapleurally
- Directly into the tumour–intralesional or intratumoral

How does chemotherapy work?

- Chemotherapy works by stopping or slowing the growth of cancer cells, which grow and divide quickly. Sometimes it can harm healthy cells that divide quickly, such as those that line your mouth and intestines or cause your hair to grow. Damage to healthy cells may cause side effects. Usually side effects go away after chemotherapy is over.

What are the side effects of Chemotherapy?

As mentioned earlier, Chemotherapy is often associated with some side effects. These side effects are due to collateral damage to normal cells with cancer cells. Some patients have quite a few side effects and some patients do not have any side effects at all. Your oncologist always prescribes additional drugs to prevent or minimize these side effects.

- Immediate side effects- Infusion reaction and leakage of drugs around the vein
- Early Side effects- Nausea and Vomiting (In first few days)
- Intermediate side effects- Mouth/throat ulcers, reduction of blood count, weakness and hair loss
- Late side effects- lung, heart, liver or nerve changes (observed after months and years)

You should discuss with your doctor about how you feel and he/she will find out best possible way to help you out.

Ways to stay motivated during chemotherapy

- Relax. Find some quiet time and think of yourself in a favorite place. Breathe slowly or listen to soothing music. This may help you feel calmer and less stressed.