



Importance of Chemotherapy Drugs and their Side Effects

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DESCRIPTION

Chemotherapy is the use of anticancer drugs to treat cancer cells. Chemotherapy has been used for many years and is one of the most common treatments for cancer. In most cases, chemotherapy works by blocking the ability of cancer cells to grow. Different groups of drugs work in different ways to fight cancer cells. Chemotherapy can be used alone or in combination with other treatments such as radiation or surgery for some types of cancer. Combinations of chemotherapy drugs are often used to fight certain cancers. Certain chemotherapy drugs may be given in a certain order, depending on the type of cancer being treated.

Chemotherapy is very effective in treating certain types of cancer, but chemotherapy drugs reach all parts of the body, not just cancer cells. Because of this, many side effects can occur during treatment. Being able to anticipate these side effects can help us and our care giver prepare and in some cases prevent these symptoms from occurring. Tiredness (fatigue) is one of the most common side effects of chemotherapy.

Many people undergoing treatment feel tired most of the time, or get tired quickly after doing their daily tasks.

It can help to:

- Get plenty of rest
- Avoid doing tasks or activities that do not feel up to
- Do light exercise, such as walking or yoga, if we able to, this can boost our energy level, but be careful not to push our self too hard
- Ask friends and family for help with everyday task

There are more than 50 chemotherapy drugs in common use. Side effects may occur immediately after treatment (days or weeks) or after chemotherapy it can occur in (months or years). The side effects listed below are not a complete list. Other side effects are possible. Because each person has different medical characteristics and diagnoses, they respond differently to treatment. Side effects may be severe, mild, or absent. Be sure to discuss potential side effects of treatment with our cancer care

team before starting treatment.

Chemotherapy may cause bruising and bleeding. Many people undergoing chemotherapy experience this side effect. Bleeding more than usual is dangerous. We recommend taking precautions. B. Wear gloves while gardening and cutting food. Also, take sufficient measures to prevent injuries such as falling. See the doctor for serious cuts or injuries, or bruises that seem to heal slowly. The American Cancer Society (ACS) recommends calling the cancer team right away if we have bleeding or unexplained bruising during cancer treatment, or if we have blood in our stool or urine.

Chemotherapy can damage hair follicles, making them weak, brittle, and falling out. Each hair that grows back can be a different texture or color. Chemotherapy drugs can also cause side effects that are not apparent until months or years after treatment. Late side effects vary by chemotherapy drug but may include:

- Damage to lung tissue
- Heart problems
- Infertility
- Kidney problems
- Nerve damage (peripheral neuropathy)
- Risk of a second cancer

Taking chemotherapy drugs more frequently or in larger doses is more likely to cause pain and discomfort in the mouth and throat. Certain types of chemotherapy affect mucous membranes more than others. We can experience:

- Dry mouth, or xerostomia
- Mouth sores that form on the tongue or gums, making us more susceptible to infection
- Bleeding
- Swelling
- Cavities
- A metallic or chemical taste
- Difficulty chewing and swallowing

If we have trouble eating or if the treatment causes food to taste unusual or unpleasant, it may lead to unintentional weight loss.

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