

Chemotherapy

Chemotherapy, also called chemo, is medicines used to treat cancer. These medicines destroy cancer cells, keep them from growing and spreading, shrink the size of a tumor or relieve cancer symptoms.

Depending on the type of cancer, chemotherapy medicine may be given:

- With other medicine.
- Before or after surgery and/or radiation to shrink a tumor.
- In cycles so that your body can rest and repair between treatments.
- Throughout the body or directly into the site of the cancer.
- In a vein called an IV or intravenous or as a pill, an injection, skin lotion or cream.
- In a hospital, doctor's office or clinic.

Your doctor will decide on the type of medicines and how often they are to be given.

Side Effects

Chemo can destroy or slow down the growth of normal cells, including cells of the hair, mouth, digestive system, and blood stream. This can result in:

- Hair loss
- Mouth sores
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Infections
- Tiredness
- Bleeding problems

You will be watched closely for side effects. Let your doctor or nurse know how you are feeling. Exams, blood tests and medicines will be used to prevent or treat any side effects and check your condition.

Talk to your doctor or nurse if you have any questions or concerns.