



Your Guide Through Chemotherapy

Dear Sutter Patient,

Thank you for choosing the Sutter network to care for you during your cancer journey. We understand that a cancer diagnosis can be very frightening and impact all areas of your life. Please know that you're surrounded by caring and compassionate oncology clinicians and support staff throughout Northern California. We'll work to make sure your experience is one where you feel listened to, safe and engaged in your care.

This chemotherapy education notebook was created by a team of Sutter network oncology clinicians and is based on feedback from you, our patients. With your input, we've focused on what we believe is most important for you to know about managing your chemotherapy treatment and feeling your best throughout therapy. We hope to help you avoid side effects, but when that isn't possible, we will help you manage your symptoms to feel well. Here we offer you education, tips and ideas to maintain your energy and even grow stronger during treatment. If you have additional questions after reading through this booklet, your care team is always here to answer them.

We wish you the very best experience on your cancer journey and will be cheering you every step of the way.

Kindest Regards,
Your Oncology Team

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Welcome to Sutter Infusion

Across Northern California, we have multiple locations where patients can receive their treatment. No matter which you choose, your highly skilled team of clinicians and supportive staff will take wonderful care of you.

- **Alta Bates Summit Medical Center Infusion**
2001 Dwight Way
Berkeley, CA 94704
510-204-1591
- **California Pacific Medical Center**
Pacific Heights Campus
Bryan Hemming Cancer
Care Infusion Center
2351 Clay St., Suite 134
San Francisco, CA 94115
415-600-3073
- **Eden Medical Center**
Universal Care Unit
Ambulatory Infusion
20103 Lake Chabot Road
Castro Valley, CA 94546
510-727-3248
- **Memorial Medical Center Infusion Center**
1700 Coffee Road
Modesto, CA 95355
209-530-3673
- **Mills-Peninsula Medical Center**
Dorothy Schneider Cancer
Center
100 S. San Mateo Drive
San Mateo, CA 94401
650-696-4509
- **PAMF Infusion Fremont**
3200 Kearney St.,
Third Floor
Fremont, CA 94538
510-498-2335
- **PAMF Infusion Mountain View**
701 E. El Camino Real,
First Floor
Mountain View, CA 94040
650-934-7600
- **PAMF Infusion Palo Alto**
795 El Camino Real,
Lee Building, Level A
Palo Alto, CA, 94301
650-853-2905
- **PAMF Infusion Santa Cruz**
2850 Commercial Crossing
Santa Cruz, CA 95065
831-460-7355
- **PAMF Infusion Sunnyvale**
301 Old San Francisco Road,
First Floor
Sunnyvale, CA 94807
650-934-7600



- **Sutter Amador Hospital Infusion**
100 Mission Blvd.,
Suite 2500
Jackson, CA 95642
209-257-7480
- **Sutter Auburn Faith Hospital Infusion**
11710 Education St.
Auburn, CA 96602
530-886-6760
- **Sutter Coast Hospital Infusion Center**
780 E. Washington Blvd.,
Building C
Crescent City, CA 95531
707-464-8998
- **Sutter Davis Hospital Infusion**
2000 Sutter Place
Davis, CA 95616
530-757-5124
- **Sutter Medical Center, Sacramento Infusion**
2800 L St., Suite 320
Sacramento, CA 95816
916-887-4977
- **Sutter Roseville Medical Center Infusion**
8 Medical Plaza Drive,
Suite 250
Roseville, CA 95661
916-878-4960
- **Sutter Santa Rosa Regional Hospital Infusion**
3883 Airway Drive,
Suite 300
Santa Rosa, CA 95403
707-521-7750
- **Sutter Solano Cancer Center**
100 Hospital Drive
Vallejo, CA 95489
707-551-3400
- **Sutter Tracy Community Hospital**
Infusion Room
1420 N. Tracy Blvd.
Tracy, CA 95376
209-832-6099

Every time you talk with a health care provider

ASK THESE 3 QUESTIONS

1

**What is
my main
problem?**

2

**What do
I need
to do?**

3

**Why is it
important
for me to
do this?**

Ask
Good Questions
for Your Good Health **Me3[®]**



ihi.org/AskMe3

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Chemotherapy and Immunotherapy

What is chemotherapy?

Chemotherapy uses medicines to kill cancer cells. It's often called "chemo." Chemo may slow cancer growth, stop cancer from spreading or help get rid of the cancer.

Chemo can be given at different locations, such as a hospital, a doctor's office or a clinic. Sometimes chemo treatments can be done at home.

You may get chemo in "cycles." This means that you get a number of treatments over a set period of time. Then you take a break before you start again.

Chemo helps treat many kinds of cancer, but it can also affect healthy cells along with the cancer cells. This is why some types of chemo cause side effects, such as nausea, losing your hair or feeling tired.

What is immunotherapy for cancer?

Immunotherapy helps treat cancer by supporting the body's immune system. This type of treatment can restore, boost or redirect the immune system. Because of the way it works, it may also be called targeted therapy or biotherapy.

Immunotherapy for cancer includes medicines (checkpoint inhibitors, monoclonal antibodies, interleukins), immune cell therapies (CAR T-cell therapy) and treatment vaccines.

What are the goals of therapy?

The goals of treatment with chemotherapy and immunotherapy include curing your cancer, shrinking cancer prior to surgery and controlling the cancer or its symptoms.

Self-Care During Treatment

Healthy Eating, Exercise, Mindfulness, Social Support

Some people want to learn more about how to care for their bodies and mental health when learning of a cancer diagnosis or during treatment. Below, we've suggested a few ways to help you feel stronger in your mind, body and spirit.

Physical Activity

Physical activity can help reduce pain and fatigue. It can also prevent muscle spasms and stiffness in your joints. Stretching and range-of-motion exercises can help you stay strong, flexible and mobile.

Being physically active also can help with your emotional and mental health. It may be hard to be active when you don't feel well, but if you can, going for a walk or a swim may help you feel better, especially during cancer treatment.

Be sure to talk to your doctor before you increase your level of physical activity.

If you don't know how to get started, please speak with your team about a referral to physical therapy. Therapists can work with you to find exercise based on how you feel right now.

Counseling

Counseling can help you find ways to cope with your cancer and any discomfort from cancer treatments. Sometimes counseling may also be helpful for your family. Depending on the therapist you work with, they may be able to offer music therapy, pet

therapy, dance therapy or art therapy either in individual or group sessions.

If this is something you would be interested in, please talk with your care team for options close to home or work.

Support Groups

Available either at your hospital, cancer center or in your community, support groups offer you the chance to meet other people who are going through similar experiences. Typically groups focus on a particular type of cancer and are meant for either patients or caregivers. Support groups are offered in person and virtually. Please talk with your treatment team about support groups available to you.

Meditation

This usually involves slow, regular breathing and sitting quietly for at least 15 to 20 minutes. There are multiple options to participate in meditation, including podcasts, apps and different websites.

Acupuncture

Very thin needles are inserted into the skin at certain points on the body. Please talk with your care team to see if this treatment is available at your cancer center.

Biofeedback

This method uses the mind to help control a body function that the body normally controls on its own. These functions include muscle tension and blood pressure.

Before you try a complementary treatment, talk to your doctor. These treatments aren't meant to take the place of standard medical treatment.

Nutrition Guidelines for Chemotherapy

Eating and drinking correctly is important after chemotherapy to prevent unwanted side effects and to help support the body for recovery.

Eating

Here are some general guidelines for chemotherapy treatment. Ask your dietitian for your specific guidelines. Most will recommend a whole-foods diet, limiting the amount of processed sugars and fried foods.

Eat a regular meal or snack prior to going to chemotherapy, avoiding spicy or greasy foods. Be sure to ask how long your treatment will take as you may want to pack snacks or a meal.

Some examples are:

- A salad with protein like turkey or chicken
- Cereal, fruit and milk
- Eggs and toast
- Fresh fruit and cottage cheese or yogurt
- Soup and sandwich

During your chemotherapy treatment, you may want to snack on crackers and low-acid juices (apple, grape or fruit nectars) as well as broth-based soups (not cream-based). You might enjoy hard candy like lemon drops or mints to mask unpleasant tastes.

Be gentle with your stomach after chemotherapy. What you put in may help minimize issues with nausea and vomiting. Here are some simple guidelines of what to eat, drink and avoid:

Eat

- Baked or broiled meats, chicken or fish.
- Cool foods with less odor.
- Small meals frequently.
- Whole-food diet. Try to stay away from pre-packaged, highly processed foods.

Drink

- A variety of fluids, not just water.
- Fluids in between meals.
- Gatorade has dyes and less electrolytes than we recommend. Use Pedialyte instead.
- Low-acid, non-citric juices, such as apple or grape juice.
- Small amounts frequently.

Try Not to Eat/Drink

- Acidic foods (tomatoes, orange juice).
- Fried foods.
- Raw foods (eggs, fish, meat, dairy).
- Spicy foods.

Some patients have other dietary considerations prior to being diagnosed with cancer, such as with diabetes, Crohn's disease and heart disease. Some cancers are also more irritating to the stomach because of where the cancer is along the gut or sometimes because of treatment. It's important for you to talk with your doctor about your concerns and to ask for a referral to a dietitian. They're here and available to support you on your journey to healing.

Drinking

Drinking fluids will help you to stay hydrated and feeling good. It may also help you reduce feelings of tiredness and pain.

Try to drink at least 8-10 glasses of fluid every day. The following chart will give you options and ideas:

Savory		Juices	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Broth• Chicken noodle soup• Chicken rice soup• Miso soup• Other broth-based soups only, no creamed-based soups		Apple juice	Milk
		Apricot nectar	Peach nectar
		Coconut water	Watermelon
		Grape juice	
Water-Based		Other Ideas	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teas, such as herbal, black, green or ginger tea• Water		Ginger ale	Popsicles
		Jell-O	Sherbet
		Pedialyte	

Taste Changes

Changes in taste are common with cancer and cancer treatment, especially if you're receiving radiation therapy to the neck and mouth area. Taste changes are usually a temporary condition, and your team will alert you if this is something you may experience during treatment. Common complaints are of food having no taste or tasting too sweet, too bitter or metallic. Losing your taste may make it harder to eat, which can cause weight loss. With time and healing, taste often returns to normal.

What you can do if foods taste too bitter:

- Add honey or sweetener to foods and drinks.
- Add sweet fruits to meals.
- Alternate protein sources might be blandly prepared chicken and fish, mild cheeses, eggs, dairy products or tofu.
- If meat tastes too bitter, eat it cold or at room temperature.
- Marinating foods may make them taste better. Marinate meats or fish in pineapple juice, wine, Italian dressing, lemon juice, soy sauce or sweet-and-sour sauces.

What you can do if foods taste too sweet:

- Avoid fruit juice and other sweet drinks, or dilute drinks with half water or ice.
- Avoid sweet fruits. Vegetables may be more appealing.
- Consider a squeeze of Meyer lemon on your foods to disguise the strong sweet flavor.

What you can do if foods taste off:

- Add plain yogurt or sour cream to soups and sauces to disguise off tastes.
- Choose bland foods. Eggs, cheeses (including cottage cheese), hot cereals, puddings, custards, tapioca, toast, potatoes, rice and peanut butter are less likely to taste strange than foods with more distinctive flavors.
- Drinking water, tea, ginger ale and fruit juices mixed with club soda may remove some of the strange tastes in your mouth. It might also help to suck on hard candies, such as sugar-free mints.

Understanding Your Blood Counts

How does your treatment affect your blood cells?

Cancer occurs when cells in the body divide and grow at an abnormally fast rate. Chemotherapy is a common treatment for many of these cancers. Chemotherapy works by stopping or killing these cells that divide more frequently. However, it doesn't have the ability to select only cancer cells for destruction. There are some healthy cells in the body that also rapidly divide and are destroyed by chemotherapy. These include the body's bone marrow (blood cell factory), gut, skin and hair cells.

How is a low blood count treated?

All parts of the blood are produced by your bone marrow inside your bones. There are medications that can stimulate your bone marrow to produce more blood cells. Your doctor may also consider a blood or platelet transfusion. Your doctor will discuss these treatment options with you depending on your individual condition.

Understanding Your Chemistry Test

This test measures chemicals in the body and gives your doctor information on how your kidneys, liver and other organs are working. Tests may include:

- Alanine aminotransferase (ALT) – Liver function
- Albumin – Liver function
- Alkaline phosphatase – Liver function and others
- Aspartate aminotransferase (AST) – Liver function
- BUN – Kidney function
- Calcium – Bones and muscles (including heart)
- CO₂ (carbon dioxide) – Several organs
- Creatinine – Kidney function
- Serum chloride – Kidney function and others
- Serum potassium – Heart and muscles
- Serum sodium – Kidney function and others
- Total bilirubin – Liver function

What is being monitored by a complete blood count (CBC)?

A CBC is ordered by your doctor to monitor the effects of chemotherapy on your blood cell counts. There are three main parts of the blood that are monitored – red blood cells, white blood cells and platelets. Each part has a different function:

Red Blood Cells (RBCs)

The RBCs consist of hemoglobin and hematocrit (H/H), which carry and deliver oxygen from your lungs to the entire body. A low H/H is called anemia. The symptoms of anemia may include:

- Being tired or weak
- Chest pain
- Dizziness
- Light headedness
- Pale-colored skin
- Shortness of breath

What should you do if you're anemic?

- Get plenty of rest.
- Move slowly to avoid getting dizzy.
- Report increasing fatigue and shortness of breath to your nurse or doctor.
- Schedule short periods of activity and rest between activities.

Platelets

The function of platelets is to form clots and to prevent uncontrolled bleeding. A low

platelet count is called thrombocytopenia. Symptoms of a low platelet count may include:

- Bleeding gums.
- Dark/black colored bowel movements.
- Easy bruising.
- Nose bleeds.
- Red/purple spots on your skin or in your mouth.

What should you do if your platelet count is low?

- Avoid contact sports.
- Check with your doctor before seeing the dentist.
- Clean your nose by gently blowing.
- Don't use aspirin or aspirin-like medications.
- Shave with an electric razor.
- Use a soft toothbrush.
- Use caution with nasal swabbing (Flu/ COVID screening).

White Blood Cells (WBC)

The function of WBCs is to fight off infection. The neutrophil is the most important part of the WBC, that helps your body to fight infection. The absolute neutrophil count (ANC) is monitored by your doctor to determine how well you'll be able to fight off infection. A low neutrophil count is called neutropenia. The lower your ANC, the higher your risk of infection.

Infection

Infection can be prevented for many patients. Throughout treatment, our goal is to avoid infection in any part of your body. We can prevent and minimize the problems associated with infection by making you more aware of how to prevent it.

Why does infection happen with cancer treatment?

- Chemotherapy affects the production of new white blood cells in your bone marrow.
- Your white blood cells (WBC) are your body's defense against infection.
- When your white blood count is low, you're more likely to get an infection.
- Central lines and urinary catheters are more likely to become infected if your white blood cell count is low.
- Your doctor or nurse will tell you when your white count is low.

Signs of Infection

- Fever with a temperature 100.4° F or above
- Areas of redness or tenderness
- Chills or shakes
- Sore throat
- Mouth sores
- Productive cough with yellow or green sputum

- Pain/burning or frequent urge to urinate
- Change in mental state or confusion

It's important to call your doctor for the following problems:

- Temperature above 100.4° F
- Sore throat, cough, congestion, chills, shaking (signs of infection)
- Shortness of breath that is new
- Mouth sores or pain when swallowing
- A cut in your skin has become reddened, swollen or is draining pus
- More than three loose, watery stools in 24 hours
- Burning or pain with urination or you have to urinate often or urgently
- Pain or soreness at injection or IV site

Monitor for Fever

- By monitoring your temperature daily, not only will you know right away if you begin to have a fever, but you'll also learn what a normal temperature is for you.
- Although a normal oral temperature is recognized as 98.6° F, an individual's temperature may be slightly higher or lower.
- Check your temperature any time you suspect you may have a fever, such as if you feel ill, feverish, chilled or you're having cold sweats. Keep a record of these temperatures to share to your team.

Food Safety

- Don't eat or drink items that are past the freshness/sell by date. Don't eat foods that have moldy spots, even if you cut them out.
- Don't eat raw or undercooked eggs, meat and seafood, including sushi.
- Wash your unpeeled fruits and vegetables with soap and water to eliminate germs.

Toileting Safety

- Be gentle and "dab" rather than wipe yourself after a bowel movement.
- Instead of toilet paper, use a baby wipe or squirt of water from a spray bottle to clean yourself.
- Tell your doctor/nurse if your bottom is sore, bleeds or if you have hemorrhoids.
- Women should wipe from front to back.

To Prevent Infection, Protect Yourself

- The single most important thing you, your family and friends can do is to wash your hands frequently.
- Use soap and warm water, lather well and rub all portions of the hand thoroughly for 20 seconds (sing "Happy Birthday" or the "ABCs" song twice).
- Insist on frequent, thorough hand washing for every member of the family:
 - After using the toilet, blowing your nose
 - After handshaking or touching animals
 - After changing a diaper
 - Before eating or preparing food to eat

- Hand Sanitizers may be used unless hands are visibly soiled or if your skin is dry and cracked.
- Keep your body clean by showering or bathing daily.
- Avoid people who are sick (colds, flu, chicken pox, shingles or other illness).
- Avoid crowded places or large gatherings where you can be exposed to germs from people coughing and sneezing near you. If you can't avoid crowded places, wear a mask. Plan activities during non-crowded times (early morning).
- You also need to stay away from adults or children who just had a "live virus" vaccine for chicken pox or polio for 14 days.
- Avoid contact with animal waste, including litter boxes, birdcages and fish tanks.

Flu Vaccine


- Discuss timing of your vaccine with your oncologist.
- Flu vaccines are recommended for cancer patients and their families.

COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic created a rapidly changing public health issue. Talk to your doctor about the current COVID-19 situation in your community and what the latest guidance is for patients like you.

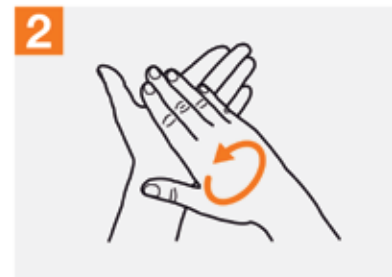
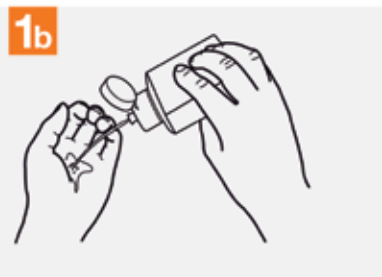
How to Handrub?

RUB HANDS FOR HAND HYGIENE! WASH HANDS WHEN VISIBLY SOILED

 Duration of the entire procedure: 20-30 seconds



Apply a palmful of the product in a cupped hand, covering all surfaces;



Rub hands palm to palm;



Right palm over left dorsum with interlaced fingers and vice versa;



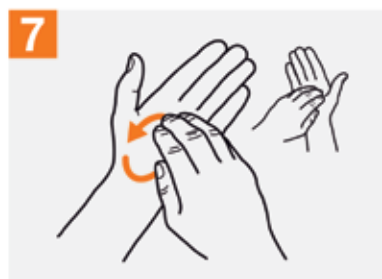
Palm to palm with fingers interlaced;



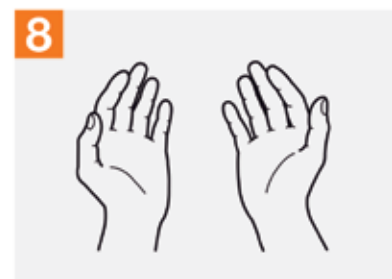
Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked;



Rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and vice versa;



Rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa;



Once dry, your hands are safe.



World Health Organization


Patient Safety

A World Alliance for Safer Health Care

SAVE LIVES
Clean Your Hands

How to Handwash?

WASH HANDS WHEN VISIBLY SOILED! OTHERWISE, USE HANDRUB

 Duration of the entire procedure: 40-60 seconds



0 Wet hands with water;



1 Apply enough soap to cover all hand surfaces;



2 Rub hands palm to palm;



3 Right palm over left dorsum with interlaced fingers and vice versa;



4 Palm to palm with fingers interlaced;



5 Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked;



6 Rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and vice versa;



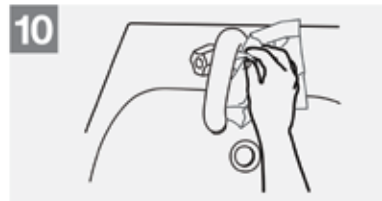
7 Rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa;



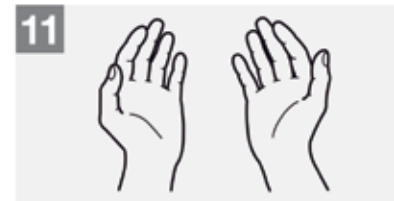
8 Rinse hands with water;



9 Dry hands thoroughly with a single use towel;



10 Use towel to turn off faucet;



11 Your hands are now safe.



World Health Organization

Patient Safety

A World Alliance for Safer Health Care

SAVE LIVES

Clean Your Hands



Fatigue

Fatigue is commonly felt by people with cancer. It can be caused by many things, such as the cancer, the effects of treatment, emotions, stress, poor nutrition and sleep disturbances. Being aware of the signals your body provides is important in the prevention and management of fatigue.

Many people describe fatigue as feeling weak, weary, worn out, heavy or slow. Resting doesn't always help. People feel fatigue in different ways. You may feel more/less fatigue than someone else who has the same type of chemotherapy.

Think of your body as an energy bank. You need to deposit rest and nutrition at the same time you withdraw energy for daily activities. Your body is working hard to recover as you receive treatment and for some time after treatment stops.

Be aware of what is most important every day. You probably won't be able to accomplish everything you usually do. Do what you must do and then ask others for help.

Preventing Fatigue

Even if you can't exercise like you used to, getting up and moving around every day can make a big difference. A short 5- or 10-minute walk can help! Many people with cancer who participate in an exercise program say they feel better and have more energy. They also report fewer side effects from their treatment.

Remember, even small amounts of activity can help put energy into the bank.

General Exercise Guidelines

Types of exercise: Walking, yoga, bike riding, swimming, active housecleaning and gardening count toward exercise.

Frequency of exercise: Ideally, you should try to exercise at least three to four times per week. You don't need to be in a structured program. Simply walking a few times a week is good exercise.

Length of exercise: You may need to start out with only 5 minutes at a time and slowly work your way up to a comfortable exercise level for you. Use your own judgment and how you're feeling to guide you.

Precautions To Take

- Avoid exercising outdoors in very cold or very warm weather.
- Don't exercise without permission from your doctor if your platelet count is below 50,000.
- If you have an infection or a fever, wait until you feel better. Begin slowly.
- Take it easy the day of your chemotherapy. Postpone exercising until another day.
- You should never feel faint, dizzy, exhausted or short of breath when exercising. If this happens, you're working too hard and should slow down.

Benefits of Exercise

- Helps with sleep
- Improves appetite
- Improves your mood
- Increases energy
- Increases strength and endurance
- Strengthens muscles and bones
- Strengthens your heart

If you're having trouble getting started, ask for a physical therapy referral.

Tips To Reduce Fatigue

Relax. You might want to try meditation, prayer, yoga, guided imagery, visualization or other ways to relax and decrease stress. For ideas on relaxation exercises, see "Learning to Relax" at [cancer.gov/about-cancer/coping/feelings/relaxation](https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/coping/feelings/relaxation).

Plan time to rest. You may feel better when you rest or take a short nap during the day. If you nap, try to sleep for less than one hour. Keeping naps short will help you sleep better at night.

Sleep at least eight hours each night. This may be more sleep than you needed before chemotherapy. You're likely to sleep better at night when you're active during the day. You may also find it helpful to relax before going to bed.

Let others help. Ask family members and friends to help when you feel fatigued. Accept their help. Often, your friends and family are looking for ways to support you.

Learn from others who have cancer. People who have cancer can help by sharing ways that they manage fatigue. One way to meet others is by joining an in-person or online support group.

Talk with your doctor or nurse. Your doctor may prescribe medication that can help decrease fatigue, give you a sense of well-being and increase your appetite. They may also suggest treatment if your fatigue is from anemia, and can help you find resources like support groups.

Nausea and Vomiting

Nausea and vomiting can be predicted and prevented for many patients. Our goal is for you to have no nausea or vomiting. It can be prevented and controlled with medications and other non-medical interventions.

Terms

- **Dry heaves** – Your body is trying to vomit even though your stomach is empty.
- **Nausea** – Feeling sick to your stomach, like you're going to throw up.
- **Vomiting** – Throwing up.

Many things can cause nausea and vomiting, such as chemotherapy, pain medicine (opioids like Vicodin and morphine), anesthesia from surgery, movement (motion sickness), indigestion, being nervous (feeling like butterflies in your stomach), constipation and radiation to the stomach area or brain.

Prevention and Management

Before Treatment

- Begin eating simple, plain foods (avoid greasy, spicy, high-fat foods) before and on the day of your chemotherapy. See nutrition guidelines on page 6.

- Fill all medications prescribed for you.
- Stock your home with foods and fluids that are easy to digest.
- Talk to your doctor about alcohol use during and after treatment.

During Treatment

If your treatment is likely to cause nausea and vomiting, you'll receive medications with your treatment to prevent these side effects. The infusion nurse will either give you pills or medication through your IV.

After Treatment

It's **very important** that you take the medications your oncologist has prescribed to **prevent** nausea and vomiting. These may include:

- Aprepitant™ (Emend)
- Ativan™ (Lorazepam) – This may cause drowsiness. Don't drive while taking this drug.
- Compazine™ (Prochlorperazine)
- Decadron™ (Dexamthasone)
- Zofran™ (Ondansetron)

Because nausea and vomiting during treatment for cancer can be caused by many things, you may need more than one of these medications to feel better. Please take these as directed by your medical team.

Some patients use complementary therapies, such as medical cannabis (marijuana) for easing nausea and vomiting. In many cases, this is OK. Please speak with your doctor before starting; your doctor may have a recommendation.

After You Go Home

- Don't lie down for one hour after eating.
- Don't skip a meal or snack, eat some crackers at least every one to two hours.
- Drink eight to 10 eight-ounce glasses of fluids to help flush the chemotherapy out of your system.
- Drink and eat foods at room temperature (not hot and not cold).
- Eat five to six snacks each day rather than three big meals.
- Eat simple, plain foods for the next two to three days, allowing your stomach to rest and recover.
- Keep saltines nearby and eat two to three crackers before getting out of bed in the morning.

Things To Try

- Acupuncture – Your doctor may be able to refer you to someone who specializes in cancer treatment.
- Aromatherapy with ginger, peppermint, lavender, fennel seed or lemon oil.
- Deep-breathing exercises.

- Distraction – Try reading, watching a TV show you love. Say “yes” to binge watching!
- Ginger (ginger candy, ginger tea, ginger ale, ginger lozenges).
- Ice chips or popsicles.
- Keep a fan blowing cool air to your face/ upper body.
- Listen to your favorite music.
- Meditation.
- Motion sickness wrist bands (acupressure).
- Peppermint tea or other peppermint products (gum, mints).

Eating and drinking correctly is important after chemotherapy to prevent unwanted side effects and to help support the body during recovery.

You should be able to drink plenty of fluids and eat small amounts of food without nausea or vomiting.

If you're still having problems despite prevention, call your doctor or nurse. We're here to help you.

Indigestion/Heartburn

You may experience heartburn or indigestion at times for several weeks during treatment. This is often a result of the medications we give you to stop the nausea. We suggest keeping Mylanta™, Tums™ or Rolaids™ in the house. If heartburn or indigestion continues, please tell us so we can give you a prescription for something stronger.

Constipation

Constipation is a common problem for patients undergoing chemotherapy. Treatment can alter one's appetite, the way food moves through the body and how the body eliminates waste. Signs and symptoms of constipation include:

- Bowel movements that are small and marble-like.
- Hard bowel movements that are difficult to pass out of the body.
- Infrequent to almost no bowel movements.
- Pain/pressure in the stomach that may move down lower to your bottom (rectum).
- Straining for a bowel movement.

Causes of constipation include different medications and medical conditions. If left untreated, constipation may get worse and cause a blockage that may need medical treatment. It's very important to be sure you're having normal bowel movements for by your own standards. Just remember it's best to have soft, formed stool that's easy to pass out of your body at least every two to three days.

Dietary and Lifestyle Management

- Increase fluids. Drink eight to 10 eight-ounce cups of liquid each day.
- Increase caffeine intake to stimulate intestinal muscles.

- Increase your fiber intake. Include fruits and vegetables, whole-grain breads, cereals and pastas, legumes, nuts and seeds in the foods you eat every day.
- Exercise daily. At least 15-20 minutes every day will help keep your bowels moving regularly. Walking, yoga, tai chi, swimming and bicycling are all good options.

Ways to Manage/Prevent Constipation

- Meet with a dietitian to discuss the foods you eat every day and changes to your diet that may help to prevent constipation.
- Keep a calendar/journal of bowel movements to identify a change in bowel habits early.

When To Call Your Doctor

- A fever of 100.4° F or above
- Abdominal bloating
- Abdominal pain
- Nausea/vomiting
- No bowel movements for two to three days
- Unable to pass gas

Management

Some patients need to take medications to help with constipation. Many medications for constipation are over-the-counter. You should talk with your healthcare team to learn what treatments, medications and dietary or lifestyle changes might work best for you.

If constipation becomes a problem for you, it might be helpful to try the following over-the-counter medications:

- Docusate sodium, also known as DSS, Colace – This stool softener can help prevent constipation before it's a problem.
- Senna – This is a mild, natural laxative that can be found in pill form (Senokot, Senokot-S with stool softener) or in tea such as Smooth Move.
- Miralax – This newer laxative helps bring water to the stools to make them softer and increases the frequency of bowel movements.
- Milk of Magnesia – An effective laxative that is stronger than Senna.

Call your nurse early in the day to get suggestions. You can try these suggestions and call back for the next step.

Remember: Prevent constipation if you can, but call as soon as it becomes a problem. Don't try to manage it yourself. Your care team can help you.

Diarrhea

Diarrhea is a common problem for patients receiving chemotherapy treatments because these medications can harm healthy cells in your large and small intestine. Signs and symptoms of diarrhea include:

- Frequent and liquid/watery stools (three or more in a 24-hour period).
- Possible abdominal cramping.
- Unusual, foul odor.

Causes include chemotherapy and radiation to the stomach and pelvic areas, surgery, bacterial infections, antibiotics and other drugs used to treat constipation. When left untreated, the diarrhea may get worse and may not improve on its own. This may cause food and liquid to pass through the bowel so quickly that the body cannot absorb enough nutrition, vitamins, minerals and water from them. This can lead to dehydration, which occurs when your body does not have enough water.

When To Call Your Doctor

- A fever of 100.4° F or above.
- Three or more bowel movements in a 24-hour period.
- Loose or watery bowel movements.
- Moderate to severe abdominal cramping/pain.
- Dark stools or blood in stools.
- Mucous in stool.
- Unresolved diarrhea despite dietary changes and use of an anti-diarrhea medication.

- Stomach pain/cramping with or without drinking fluids.
- Light-headedness/dizziness/seeing “stars.”
- Racing heart, rapid heartbeat (faster than your normal heartbeat).
- Sore/raw/bleeding rectum (bottom).

Treatment of Diarrhea

- Change what you eat/drink.
- Dietitians can help you choose foods to prevent and manage diarrhea.
- Some people need IV fluids to replace lost water and nutrients. If needed, this will be ordered by your doctor.
- Talk with your doctor or nurse before starting any medication to treat diarrhea.

Dietary Management

- Drink plenty of clear fluids. Aim for eight to 10, eight-ounce cups per day. Water, diluted juice, sports drinks, broth, gelatin and popsicles are examples of clear fluids.
- Fiber can make diarrhea worse. Try to eat small amounts of soft bland low-fiber foods, such as bananas, rice, noodles, white bread, applesauce, vanilla or plain yogurt, skinned chicken breast, or turkey.
- Your doctor may recommend a BRAT diet, which involves bananas, rice, apple sauce and toast.
- Eat five or six small meals and snacks each day instead of three large meals.

- Ask your doctor or nurse about foods that are high in salts, such as sodium and potassium. Your body can lose these salts when you have diarrhea, and it's important to replace them. Foods that are high in sodium or potassium include bananas, peach and apricot nectar, oranges, and boiled or mashed potatoes.
- **Avoid these foods** as they may cause gas, irritation of the stomach lining and more frequent and larger amounts of diarrhea:
 - Alcohol – Beer, wine, vodka, tequila, rum, whiskey and any other type.
 - Apple juice – The sugar content is high and will worsen diarrhea.
 - Caffeine – Regular coffee, black tea, cola, energy drinks and chocolate.
 - Drinks that are very hot or very cold.
 - Fiber – Cooked dried beans, raw fruits and vegetables, nuts, whole-wheat breads, and cereals (if reading food product labels, aim for 1 gram or less of fiber per serving).
 - Greasy and fried foods – French fries, hamburgers and many fast food choices.
 - Milk or milk products – Ice cream, milkshakes, sour cream and cheese.
 - Soy products – Tofu and soy milk.
 - Spicy foods – Hot sauce, salsa, chili and curry dishes.

To learn more about ways to manage diarrhea during cancer treatment, read

Eating Hints: Before, during, and after Cancer Treatment, a booklet from National Cancer Institute, available at [cancer.gov/publications/patient-education/eating-hints](https://www.cancer.gov/publications/patient-education/eating-hints).

Skin Care During Diarrhea

- Clean skin around anus gently with warm water and a soft cloth, then dry gently and completely.
- Be gentle when you wipe yourself after a bowel movement. Instead of toilet paper, use a baby wipe or squirt of water from a spray bottle to clean yourself after a bowel movement.
- Sitz baths may provide relief to a bottom irritated by diarrhea. Place three to four inches of cool water in the tub and soak for 10 to 15 minutes a few times each day, then pat dry or air dry.
- A barrier cream (such as Desitin™ or Butt Balm™) may protect irritated skin.
- Allow the irritated skin to be exposed to open air as much as possible. Consider/ try laying on your stomach on top of a bed with a cool fan blowing gently on irritated bottom area.



Hair, Skin and Nail Changes

Some types of chemotherapy can damage the fast-growing cells in your hair, skin and nails. While these changes may temporarily change one's appearance, most are minor and don't require treatment. Sometimes serious skin changes need to be treated right away due to the tissue damage they can cause.

Minor Skin Changes

- Acne-like rash.
- Hyperpigmentation is a problem that results in dark patches on your skin or a darker skin color. Dark patches may occur:
 - Around your joints
 - Under your nails
 - In your mouth
 - Along the vein used to give you chemotherapy
 - Under tape or dressings
 - In your hair
- Itching, dryness, redness, rashes and peeling.
- Sensitivity to the sun (when you burn very quickly). This problem can happen even if you've never had a sunburn.

Major Causes of Skin Changes

- **Radiation** – Some chemotherapy causes skin in the area where you had radiation therapy to turn red. The color can range from very light to bright red. Your skin may blister, peel or be painful.
- **Chemotherapy leaking from your IV** – You need to let your doctor or nurse know right away if you have burning or pain when you get IV chemotherapy.
- **Allergic reactions to chemotherapy** – Some skin changes mean that you're allergic to the chemotherapy. Let your doctor or nurse know right away if you wheeze or have trouble breathing along with:
 - Sudden and severe itching
 - Rashes
 - Hives

Changes to Nails and How to Care for Them

- Besides becoming darker, your nails may also turn yellow or become brittle and cracked.
- Sometimes your nails will loosen and fall off, but new nails will grow back in.
- Wear gloves when washing dishes, working in the garden or cleaning the house.
- Let your doctor or nurse know if your cuticles are red and painful.

Daily Skin Care

- Avoid direct sunlight. During the summer, the sun tends to be the strongest from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m.
- Use sunscreen lotion with an SPF (skin protection factor) of 30 or higher.
- Use sun block on the tops of ears and head, back, hands and face/lips.
- Use sun block if you'll be riding in a car for any length of time.
- Wear light-colored pants, long-sleeve cotton shirts and hats with wide brims.
- Don't use tanning beds.

Caring for Skin Changes

You may experience a combination of itching, dryness, redness, rashes and peeling.

- Don't use talcum powder.
- Take quick showers or sponge baths instead of long, hot baths.
- Pat, rather than rub, yourself dry after bathing.
- Wash with a mild, moisturizing soap.
- Put on cream or lotion while your skin is

still damp after washing. Tell your doctor or nurse if this doesn't help.

- Don't use perfume, cologne or aftershave lotion with alcohol.
- Take a colloidal oatmeal bath when your whole body itches. Colloidal oatmeal is a special powder you can add to bath water.

Acne-Like Rash

- The rash usually develops on the upper body, both front and back, and on the face.
- Keep your face clean and dry.
- Don't use acne treatment products as they are drying and may make this rash worse.
- Ask your doctor or nurse if you can use medicated creams or soaps and which ones to use.

Hair Loss

Hair loss (also called alopecia or baldness) is when some or all of your hair falls out.

Some types of chemotherapy damage cells that cause hair growth and affects hair on your head, face, arms, legs, underarms and the pubic area between your legs.

Many people are upset by the loss of their hair and find it the most difficult part of chemotherapy.

Hair loss usually starts two weeks after chemotherapy begins. Your scalp may hurt at first. You may lose your hair either a little at a time or it may fall out in clumps. Sometimes hair starts growing back even while you're getting chemotherapy. Your new hair may not be the same color or feel the

way as it did before. For example, your hair may be thin instead of thick, curly instead of straight or darker instead of lighter in color.

Managing and Coping With Hair Loss

Talk with your care team. They'll know if you're likely to have hair loss and may suggest options such as cold-cap therapy.

Cut your hair short or shave your head. You might feel more in control of hair loss if you first cut your hair or shave your head. This often makes hair loss easier to manage. If you do shave your head, use an electric shaver instead of a razor.

Choose a Wig Before Chemotherapy

- This way, you can match the wig to the color and style of your hair.
- You might also take it to your hair dresser who can style the wig to look like your own hair.
- Make sure to choose a wig that feels comfortable and doesn't hurt your scalp.

Insurance Coverage for Wigs

Some insurance plans may cover the cost of a wig. If your plan won't cover the cost, you can deduct the cost of your wig as a medical expense on your income tax. Some groups also have free "wig banks." Your care team will know if there's a wig bank near you.

Gently Wash Your Hair

- Dry your hair by patting (not rubbing) it with a soft towel.
- Use a mild shampoo such as a baby shampoo.

Items That Can Hurt Your Scalp

Don't use items that can damage your scalp, such as:

- Brush rollers or curlers
- Electric hair dryers
- Hair bands and clips
- Hair dyes
- Hairsprays
- Products to perm or relax your hair
- Straightening or curling irons

Protect Your Scalp

- Always apply sunscreen or sunblock to protect your scalp.
- Avoid very hot and cold places, such as tanning beds and being outside in the sun or cold air.
- Wear a hat, turban or scarf when you're outside to stay warm.
- Sleep on a satin pillow case. Satin creates less friction than cotton when you sleep on it. Therefore, you may find satin pillow cases more comfortable.

Talk About Your Feelings

Many people feel angry, depressed or embarrassed about hair loss. If you're worried or upset, talk about these feelings with your care team, family member, close friend or someone who has had hair loss caused by cancer treatment.

Peripheral Neuropathy

Certain types of chemotherapy can cause people to develop tingling, burning or numbness in their fingers and toes or hands and feet. You may have increased sensitivity to heat or cold. You may have heightened sensitivity where even a light touch can feel painful. In some cases, your hearing can be affected.

Report Symptoms

It's extremely important for you to report these symptoms to both your treatment nurse and your doctor. There are options to modify your dose or change your treatment plan before symptoms become severe.

- In a small but significant percent of cases, neuropathy can persist for years following treatment, so it's important to follow protective measures.
- You can follow recommendations shown in the right column while you and your doctor monitor the symptoms.

Management

- Your doctor will consider what medication will work best for you in the treatment of peripheral neuropathy.
- Sometimes it may take trying one, two or even three different medications to find what works for you.

Safety Recommendations

- Be careful with any activity that involves heat (cooking) or sharp objects (gardening, crafts). Look for cuts or blisters on your hands and feet.
- Damage to your nerves can affect your balance and your reflexes. Ask for a referral for a balance evaluation by a physical therapist.
- Footwear can make a difference! Athletic shoes are a great option.
- If your hands are affected, you may need to watch that you're fully grasping objects.
- Inspect your feet. Your ability to feel a cut or infection (including athlete's foot) may be impaired.
- Watch your step! If you lack full sensation in your feet, you may not know whether your feet are fully on a step or if you've cleared the height of a curb. Use handrails if available.



Cancer Pain

Cancer pain may be caused by cancer or by medical procedures used to diagnose or treat the cancer, such as radiation or surgery. The pain may make it hard for you to do your normal activities, such as sleeping or eating. Over time, cancer pain can cause appetite and sleep problems, isolation and depression.

There are many ways to treat cancer pain, and treating your pain will make you feel better. With treatment, you'll be able to be more active, eat, sleep and enjoy your family and friends.

What are the different types of cancer pain?

The type of pain depends on how cancer or cancer treatment affects your body.

Common types include:

- **Bone pain** – For example, a tumor that presses on your bones or grows into your bones can cause deep, aching pain.
- **Nerve pain** – A tumor that presses on a nerve can cause a burning, tingling, shocking or numb feeling. Sometimes chemotherapy, radiation or surgery can damage nerves and cause nerve pain.

- **Phantom pain** – This is felt in the area where a body part such as an arm or a breast has been removed. Even though the body part is gone, nerve endings at the site still send pain signals to the brain. The brain thinks the body part is still there.

Types of Cancer Pain

- **Acute** – A bad pain that lasts a short time.
- **Chronic** – This is a pain that comes and goes over a long time. Chronic pain can range from mild to severe.
- **Breakthrough** – This is a severe pain that occurs while you're taking medicines that usually control your pain. Breakthrough pain usually starts suddenly and lasts for a short time.

Cancer Pain Key Points

- Cancer pain can almost always be reduced or relieved if you work with your doctor to create a treatment plan that is right for you.
- Pain is often easier to control right after it starts instead of waiting until it becomes bad. Treat the pain when it's 1, 2 or 3 out

of 10 rather than 4 or higher out of 10.

- People who take opioid pain medicines for cancer pain rarely develop opioid use disorder. Moderate to severe opioid use disorder is sometimes called addiction. Your body may come to expect daily doses of medicine to control the pain, but your doctor can gradually lower the amount you're taking when and if the cause of your pain is gone. This is called weaning off.
- Please talk with your doctor if you're interested in taking medical cannabis to treat your pain.
- Take your medicines exactly as prescribed. Call your doctor if you think you're having a problem with your medicine.
- There are many different medications that can be prescribed for pain, and sometimes a patient may need to take more than one medicine. Your care team will work closely with you to find what works best to treat your pain.
- You're the only person who can say how much pain you have. If you tell your doctor when you have pain or when pain changes, your doctor can help you.

How can you help your doctor treat your cancer pain?

Your doctor needs to understand your pain to treat it effectively. You can help by telling your doctor where you feel pain, what your pain feels like and what makes it better or worse. It often helps to write everything down. Some people use a pain diary for this.

Nonmedical Treatments for Cancer Pain

Some people use other treatments along with medical treatment to relieve symptoms and help them cope with cancer pain.

Heat and Cold

Heat and cold treatments can help with mild to moderate pain from cancer. Heat may relieve sore muscles. Cold may ease pain by numbing pain sensations. Try alternating heat and cold. After a heat or cold treatment, try some gentle massage for relaxation and pain relief. Talk to your doctor before you try either heat or cold during chemotherapy or radiation treatments.

Be careful when using heat or cold treatment:

- Don't apply heat or cold packs directly to bare skin. Put a thin towel or pillowcase between the pack and your skin.
- Don't apply heat or cold to skin that is red or tender from radiation treatment.
- Don't apply heat to an area where the skin is broken or injured. Heat can increase bleeding.
- Don't use heat or cold in an area where you have poor blood flow.

Acupuncture

Acupuncture is a drug-free option that can reduce the side effects of radiation, surgery and chemotherapy. Utilizing hair-thin needles carefully placed at specific points in the skin, acupuncture has become an increasingly common form of integrative medicine. It can be beneficial in treating a variety of pain symptoms, managing post-operative pain, neuropathy, fatigue, insomnia, hot flashes, dry mouth, constipation, nausea and vomiting.

Gentle Massage

Simple touch or gentle massage may help ease tension. You could ask someone else to rub your shoulders or back. You can massage your own feet, hands or neck. Self-massage works best if you're in comfortable clothes and are sitting or lying in a comfortable position. Use oil or lotion to massage bare skin.

Avoid massage in any areas where you have visible tumors, open wounds, skin that is tender from radiation or a blood clot in a vein.

Distraction

Distraction can help you focus your attention on something other than pain. Paying attention to something other than pain can make the pain easier to handle. Distraction can be useful whenever you're waiting for pain medicines to start working.

Physical Activity

Physical activity can help reduce pain and fatigue. It can also prevent muscle spasms and stiffness in your joints. Stretching and range-of-motion exercises can help you stay strong, flexible and mobile.

Being physically active also can help with your emotional and mental health. It may be hard to be active when you don't feel well. But if you're able, going for a walk or a swim may help you feel better, especially during cancer treatment.

Be sure to talk to your doctor before you increase your level of physical activity.



Sexuality, Fertility and Chemotherapy

Sexuality is an important part of who we are. Feelings about sexuality affect our relationships with others, our self-image and our zeal for living.

Fertility Preservation

If you're of childbearing age and want to have children, be sure to talk to your doctor before starting chemotherapy. We have more detailed information we can provide you.

Safe Sex

Pregnancy is often possible during chemotherapy, but it should be avoided because some chemo drugs may cause birth defects. Doctors advise women of childbearing age – from the teens through the end of menopause – to use birth control throughout treatment.

Use condoms to protect your partner. For two to three days following chemotherapy, there will be some trace elements of the drug in semen and vaginal fluids. You should use a condom to prevent irritation and avoid oral sex for two to three days following chemotherapy.

Sexuality and Cancer

Cancer diagnosis and treatment may affect your ability to experience the intimacy you desire. As sexuality and intimacy are very personal parts of our human existence, it can be awkward for patients, partners and healthcare providers to discuss it.

Even though it may be awkward, if you're not satisfied with your desire or ability for sex or intimacy, we encourage you to discuss these issues with your oncologist, nurse or social worker. There are medications, treatments, written resources and support for you.

Examples of sexuality and intimacy issues:

- Change in body image due to surgery and hair loss
- Change in desire
- Difficulty achieving orgasm
- Difficulty with erection
- Emotional distress related to the diagnosis and treatment
- Fatigue
- Hormonal changes that may result in mood swings, hot flashes, insomnia
- Pain
- Vaginal dryness

Mind, Body and Spirit

The Emotional Impact of Cancer

Receiving a cancer diagnosis is extremely traumatic. This is true regardless of the type of cancer or its stage. A variety of emotions may emerge and it's very important to understand that all of these feelings are normal. Allowing yourself to have all these emotions is a crucial first step.

Sadness Is Okay, Depression Isn't

Having cancer is both emotionally and physically difficult. Sadness is expected but clinical depression is entirely different and treatable. Distinguishing normal sadness from clinical depression in a person with cancer depends on psychological symptoms. Many of the physical signs of depression – problems with eating, sleeping and maintaining energy – may be a part of your cancer and/or treatment side effects.

People with cancer feel sad but still feel they're good people. A sad person can still enjoy activities and relationships. Someone with depression often withdraws from family and friends. Sad people maintain a balanced view of the world and feel capable of doing things to help themselves. People with depression often feel the entire world is hopeless and they're helpless and unable to change any aspect of the situation. While a sad person may think about death, a person with depression dwells on death and may have suicidal thoughts.

If you feel you may be suffering from depression, please speak with your doctor and ask to see your social worker at the cancer center.

Religion and Spirituality

Religion and spirituality can be powerful tools for coping with illness. Spiritual traditions can provide a feeling the world is much larger than your own individual problems. In addition, they offer an understanding of the purpose of your life as a human being. Religious institutions may provide a sense of community or offer practical support. For some people, having a cancer diagnosis may be a time to begin exploration of spirituality.

Anxiety

Anxiety means you have extra worry, can't relax, feel tense or you have panic attacks. Many people with cancer worry about how to pay bills and how the cancer will affect them and their loved ones. There are things you can do to help yourself feel calm, such as deep breathing, guided imagery, and other cognitive behavioral or mindfulness techniques. It's also common to experience some anxiety after treatment ends. Speak with your social worker about helpful referrals for additional support, such as individual counseling and support groups.

Additional Resources

Information about cancer is updated on a regular basis.
Ask your team about reliable websites and sources of information.

Websites we recommend for the most up-to-date information:

American Cancer Society – cancer.org
CancerCare – cancercare.org
National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) – nccn.org/patients

Adolescent and Young Adult Support:

Stupid Cancer – stupidcancer.org

Blood Cancers:

International Myeloma Foundation – myeloma.org
Leukemia and Lymphoma Society – lls.org

Breast Cancer:

breastcancer.org
Living Beyond Breast Cancer – lbcc.org
National Breast Cancer Foundation, Inc. – nationalbreastcancer.org
Susan G. Komen Foundation – komen.org

Colon and Rectal Cancer:

Colorectal Cancer Alliance – ccalliance.org

Lung Cancer:

GO₂ Foundation for Lung Cancer – go2foundation.org

Melanoma:

melanomahopenetwork.org

Prostate Cancer:

Prostate Cancer Foundation – pcf.org
ustoo.org

Advance Directives for Healthcare Decisions Assistance:

Make Your Wishes Known – makeyourwishesknown.org
Volunteers provide Advance Directive Forms as well as group and individual education about planning ahead for healthcare choices.

Cancer Legal Resources Center (CLRC) – thedrlc.org
The CLRC provides free and confidential information and resources on cancer-related legal issues to cancer patients/survivors, their families, friends, employers and healthcare professionals, 866-843-2572.

What Cancer Cannot Do.

Cancer is so limited ...

It cannot cripple love.

It cannot shatter hope.

It cannot corrode faith.

It cannot destroy peace.

It cannot kill friendship(s).

It cannot suppress memories.

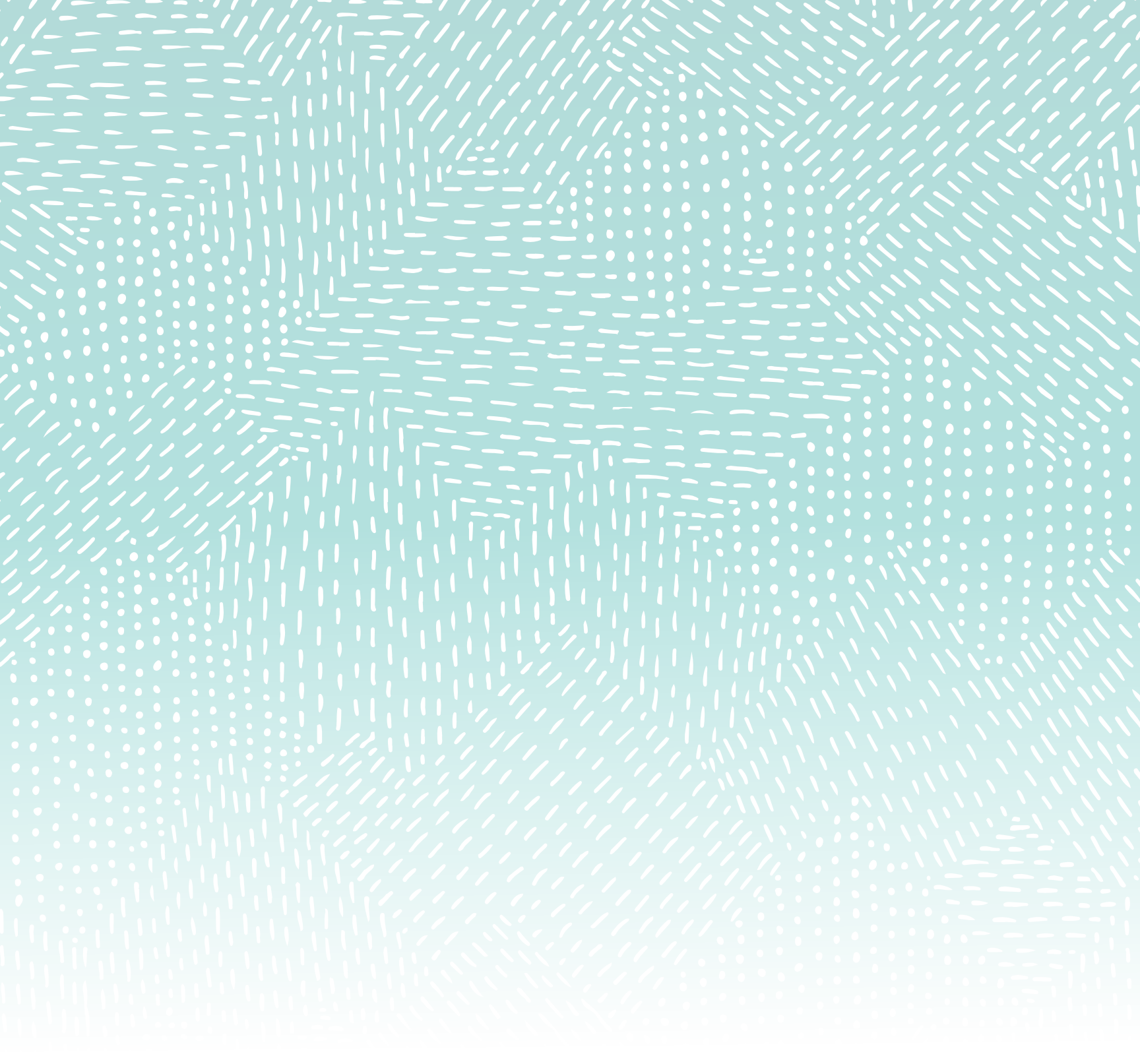
It cannot silence courage.

It cannot invade the soul.

It cannot steal eternal life.

It cannot conquer the spirit.

— Author Unknown



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