

Treating Breast Cancer with Chemotherapy

Breast Cancer can be treated in different ways. One form of treatment is chemotherapy.

What is chemotherapy?

Chemotherapy means using drugs to kill cancer cells. There are many drugs that fight cancer. Some women take more than one drug.

How is chemotherapy given?

- One way is to take pills.
- Another way is through a needle that a nurse puts in a vein (IV).
- Some people get both.

How long does chemotherapy go on?

You take chemotherapy in cycles. For each cycle, you get chemotherapy for a set number of days or weeks. Then you stop for a set number of days or weeks. This starting and stopping goes on until you finish your treatment. Your doctor will tell you how many cycles you need.

Where do I go for chemotherapy?

Most women get chemotherapy in a doctor's office or clinic or at home. A few drugs must be given in the hospital. Women with some kinds of health problems may have to stay in the hospital for their treatments.

Questions to ask your doctor before chemotherapy.

- Why do I need this treatment?
- Will I get chemotherapy through a needle or take pills?
- Where will I go for chemotherapy?
- What drugs will I take?
- How long will I be on this treatment?



How will chemotherapy make me feel?

Here are some things that sometimes happen during chemotherapy. Ask your doctor if any of these things might happen to you.

- being more likely to get infections
- bruising or bleeding more easily than usual
- feeling weak or very tired
- losing your hair
- feeling sick to your stomach
- throwing up
- having diarrhea
- getting sores in your mouth

Talking to your doctor about chemotherapy

Writing down your questions before you talk to the doctor can help you remember them. It may also help to take a family member with you.



How can I find out more about treatment for breast cancer?

- Call the West Virginia Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening Program (WVBCCSP) at 1-800-642-8522. The call is free.

or

- Call the Cancer Information Service at 1-800-4-CANCER (1-800-422-6237). The call is free.

