What is Chemotherapy for Prostate Cancer?
Chemotherapy is a treatment in which drugs move through the body to kill growing cancer cells. This type of care can also kill healthy cells, so it is known to cause some side effects.

The amount of drug used and how often are controlled to strive for the best result. These drugs tend to be given once per month for many months. Many chemotherapy drugs are given intravenously (through a vein). A few may be taken by mouth as a pill. There is no need to spend the night in the hospital for chemotherapy.

Who is a Good Candidate for Chemotherapy?
Chemotherapy is not the main treatment for most prostate cancer patients. Still, it can help:

• Men with advanced stages of prostate cancer
• Men whose cancer has spread from the prostate gland to other parts of the body
• Men with advanced prostate cancer that no longer responds to hormone therapy

Is Chemotherapy Right for Me?
Choosing the right treatment, and when to start, is a choice men should make with their doctor. No one treatment is perfect for all men.

Chemotherapy has been found to help men with prostate cancer when it is given at the same time as hormone therapy. It is not often prescribed for men with non-metastatic castration resistant prostate cancer (nmCPRC). Yet, it may help patients with metastatic castration resistant prostate cancer (mCRPC) who have not had certain other treatments. Not all men with prostate cancer will get help from chemotherapy. Also, chemotherapy may only work for a short time.

Not all prostate cancers need active treatment. Chemotherapy can be a strong treatment and should be chosen after careful thought. Learn the benefits, risks and side effects of chemotherapy before starting.

What are the Benefits and Risks of Chemotherapy?
The main benefit of chemotherapy is killing rapidly growing prostate cancer cells. Side effects of chemotherapy may depend on:

• your health
• the drug
• the dose
• length of treatment

The most common side effects are feeling very tired, upset belly, vomiting, loose stools and hair loss. A change in your sense of taste and touch (feeling numb) may also happen. There is a raised risk of infections and anemia because of lower blood cell counts. Some people become more forgetful.

Most of these side effects can be managed. After the treatment ends, many will go away. Some side effects may stay for a long time.
Other Considerations

With follow-up care, your health care team can help you with long-term side effects. This care may include routine visits with your doctor.

Men should strive to choose the right prostate cancer treatment for them. Talk to your doctor about which treatment is right for you.

About the Urology Care Foundation

The Urology Care Foundation is the world’s leading urologic foundation – and the official foundation of the American Urological Association. We provide information for those actively managing their urologic health and those ready to make health changes. Our information is based on the American Urological Association resources and is reviewed by medical experts.

To learn more, visit the Urology Care Foundation’s website, UrologyHealth.org/UrologicConditions or go to UrologyHealth.org/FindAUrologist to find a doctor near you.

Disclaimer

This information is not a tool for self-diagnosis or a substitute for professional medical advice. It is not to be used or relied on for that purpose. Please talk to your urologists or health care provider about your health concerns. Always consult a health care provider before you start or stop any treatments, including medications.

For copies of printed materials about Prostate Cancer and other urologic conditions, visit UrologyHealth.org/Download or call 800-828-7866.