



Chemotherapy For Prostate Cancer

Urology Care
FOUNDATION™
*The Official Foundation of the
 American Urological Association*

WHAT IS CHEMOTHERAPY FOR PROSTATE CANCER?

Chemotherapy is a treatment in which drugs circulate through the body to kill rapidly growing cancer cells. Unfortunately, it can also kill healthy cells, so it is known to cause some unpleasant side effects.

The amount of drug used and how often are carefully controlled to limit discomfort. These drugs tend to be given once per month for several months. Many chemotherapy drugs are given intravenously (through a vein). A few may be taken as a pill. There is no need to stay in the hospital for chemotherapy.

WHO IS A GOOD CANDIDATE FOR CHEMOTHERAPY?

Chemotherapy is not the primary 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

SHOULD I CONSIDER CHEMOTHERAPY?

Choosing the right treatment and when to begin is an individual choice that men should make with their doctor. No one treatment is perfect for every man.

Chemotherapy has been found to help patients when it is given at the same time as hormone therapy. Chemotherapy is not recommended for men with non-metastatic castration resistant prostate cancer (nmCPRC). It may help patients with metastatic castration resistant prostate cancer (mCRPC) who have not had certain other treatments.

It's important to know that chemotherapy only works for a limited time.

Not all prostate cancers require active treatment. Not everyone will benefit from chemotherapy. The decision to move forward with a powerful treatment like this should be carefully considered. 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 will depend on your health, the drug, the dose, and how long treatment lasts. The most common side effects are fatigue (feeling very tired), nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and possibly hair loss. A change in your sense of taste and touch (feeling numb) are also possible. There is an increased 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 linger for a long time.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

With follow-up care, your healthcare team can help you with long-term side effects. Your follow-up care will include regular visits with your doctor.

Choosing the right treatment for prostate cancer is an individual decision. Rather than aggressive treatment, surveillance alone may be a fine option for you.

Talk to your doctor about which treatment is right for you.

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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/Order or call 800-828-7866.

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