

Chemotherapy and Side Effects

Chemotherapy uses drugs to kill cancer cells. It can stop the growth of a tumor in the breast and kill cancer cells that have spread to other parts of the body. It usually begins 4-6 weeks after surgery. It can be given in many ways. A few of the drugs can be given by mouth, but most are injected into a vein (intravenous or IV). Chemotherapy may also be given before surgery. Answers to these questions may help you understand the need for chemotherapy.

Q: Are there tumor profiling tests that can be done on my tumor to help decide whether I should have chemotherapy?

A:

Q: What were the estrogen receptor status and progesterone receptor status of my tumor? How do these affect my treatment plan? Will I need other treatments?

A:

Q: Why do I need chemotherapy?

A:

Q: When should I begin chemotherapy?

A:

Q: What drugs will I take and why were those chosen for me?

A:

Q: How will the chemotherapy be given? How many treatments will I have?

A:

Q: If I have to go to the hospital for the treatment, how long will each treatment take? Will I need someone to go with me?

A:

Q: What are the possible side effects? How long will they last? What are the long-term risks? Which side effects should I report to you?

A:

Q: Are there medicines I can take to prevent or treat side effects?

A:

Q: Are there any complementary and integrative therapies that may help me cope with side effects?

A:

Q: During treatment, will I be able to continue my normal activities (work, exercise, etc.)?

A:

Q: What out of pocket costs may I expect?

A:



For more information on breast health or breast cancer, please call our breast care helpline (1-877-465-6636) or visit our website. Susan G. Komen does not provide medical advice.

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