

Patient FAQs

Your Guide to Chemotherapy & Immunotherapy



TREE TOP
HOSPITAL

Helping You Understand Your Treatment to
Chemotherapy & Immunotherapy

1

What is Chemotherapy?

Chemotherapy (often called “chemo”) is the use of medicines to destroy cancer cells.

- These medicines travel through your bloodstream.
- They attack cancer cells that grow and divide quickly.
- Sometimes chemo is given alone, and sometimes it’s combined with other treatments like surgery, radiotherapy, or immunotherapy.

→ Why give it?

- To shrink or eliminate cancer.
- To prevent cancer from spreading.
- To reduce symptoms and improve quality of life.



2

What is Immunotherapy?

Immunotherapy is a type of treatment that helps your body’s own immune system fight cancer.

- It “wakes up” your immune system to recognize and attack cancer cells.
- Unlike chemotherapy, it does not directly kill cancer cells but helps your body do so.

→ Why give it?

- To control cancer growth.
- To give longer-lasting cancer control.
- Sometimes it works when other treatments have stopped working.



4 Common Side Effects

Chemotherapy

- Nausea and vomiting
- Hair loss
- Tiredness (fatigue)
- Low blood counts as higher risk of infection, easy bruising, anemia
- Mouth sores
- Diarrhea or constipation

Immunotherapy

- Skin rash or itching
- Diarrhea or colitis
- Tiredness
- Inflammation in organs (lungs, liver, thyroid, etc.)

Important:

Most side effects can be managed if reported early. Always tell your doctor or nurse if you notice anything unusual.

5 Precautions While on Treatment



• Prevent infection

Wash hands often, avoid crowded places if your white counts are low.



• Food safety

Eat freshly cooked food; avoid raw or undercooked meat, fish, and eggs.



• Protect your skin

Use sunscreen; some medicines make skin more sensitive.



• Vaccines

Speak to your doctor before getting any vaccines.



• Fertility & pregnancy

Avoid becoming pregnant during treatment. Use reliable contraception.



• Medicines

Check with your doctor before starting any new medicine or herbal supplement.

Diet and Nutrition



- **Balanced meals**

Include rice, bread, fruits, vegetables, fish, chicken, eggs, and healthy fats.



- **Stay hydrated**

Drink 8–10 glasses of water daily (unless your doctor advises otherwise).



- **Small frequent meals**

Helps with nausea and improves appetite.



- **Protein rich foods**

Eggs, fish, chicken, pulses, and milk help repair body tissues.



- **Avoid**

Unpasteurized milk, raw seafood, street food, or food left unrefrigerated for long periods.

Daily Physical Activity

- Gentle daily activity can improve energy, mood, and sleep.
- Aim for 20–30 minutes of light to moderate activity (like walking, stretching, or yoga).
- Listen to your body: rest when you feel tired.
- Avoid heavy lifting or strenuous activity if your blood counts are low.

When to Call Your Doctor Immediately

- Fever (≥ 38 °C / 100.4 °F)
- Severe diarrhea or vomiting
- Shortness of breath or chest pain
- Sudden bleeding or unexplained bruising
- Severe rash or yellowing of eyes/skin
- Confusion or new neurological symptoms

Remember: You are not alone in this journey. Your oncology team is here to support you. Reporting symptoms early helps us keep you safe and ensures the best possible results from your treatment.