

## CHEMOTHERAPY QUICK FACTS



If you have been scheduled to receive chemotherapy, you will need to sign a consent form agreeing to receive treatment, and you will receive a prescription for 'chemo'.

Chemotherapy is usually given as a combination of two or more different drugs; prescribed as 'regimens' or 'protocols'; so, you may hear your doctor, or your chemo nurses say things like 'AC-T', 'FOLFOX' or 'Carbo-Taxol'. These are oncology lingo for common chemotherapy regimens.

Every time you have chemotherapy; it is called a cycle. Chemotherapy is usually given as a number of cycles at specific intervals over time. These complete number of cycles make up a course. e.g., 4 cycles of AC followed by 4 to 12 cycles of 'T' regimen could make up a course.

You may have a number of courses of chemotherapy with different regimens in the course of your cancer treatment journey.

This chemotherapy regimen will be given every at regular intervals such as weekly or every 3 weeks a number of cycles.

Chemotherapy appointments are usually long, lasting a few to many hours. You may want to come along with a book to read, a tablet (iPad) or magazine to keep you busy while receiving your treatment.

You would need to do some routine tests/investigations before every cycle of chemotherapy. This is to ensure you are physically fit for treatment and to monitor, prevent or treat side effects of chemotherapy. Your blood counts will be regularly monitored.

You should have a first review consultation with your oncologist 2 weeks after your 1st cycle of treatment. This appointment will be to assess how your 1st session went, discuss any side-effects you may have experienced, and plan your future sessions.

Download and use the [Treatment Calendar](#) to track your chemotherapy treatments. It is very important that you document and keep track of all your treatments, procedures, and results. Take this as your responsibility as part of your care team.

Low blood counts from chemotherapy can predispose you to infectious illness. You should take precautions to protect yourself from infection. In the event that you develop a fever or acute illness while on chemotherapy, please go to your hospital immediately. If you cannot make it to your primary cancer center download the [Febrile Neutropenia Card](#) and take it with you to the nearest reputable emergency center/ hospital.

Lastly, please encourage yourself, accept help and support from those that love you, block out voices that create anxiety or fear in you; and make up your mind to see this through. Chemotherapy is tough, but you are tougher!

Please feel welcome to ask your oncologist any and all of your questions.

I wish you great strength for your cancer journey.