

*Prostate Cancer*

# CHEMOTHERAPY

## What to Expect From Chemotherapy Treatment

### WHEN IS CHEMOTHERAPY YOUR BEST OPTION?

Chemotherapy is not always considered a last option. For some patients having chemotherapy earlier on in the treatment sequence can be beneficial.

### WHERE IS CHEMOTHERAPY GIVEN?

When a medical oncologist orders the chemotherapy treatment, patients typically visit an infusion center to receive it. Chemotherapy for prostate cancer can be given safely in other settings as well.

### HOW DOES CHEMOTHERAPY FEEL?

There is a vast difference in how patients respond to chemotherapy. Often chemotherapy is given with a steroid and patients may not have any symptoms or side effects for several days. Some patients may experience side effects for 1-2 weeks after their infusion and will often see improvement about 2 weeks after receiving the treatment.

### HOW LONG DOES CHEMOTHERAPY TREATMENT LAST?

Chemotherapy treatment varies from patient to patient and is based on how they are reacting to the treatment. Physicians monitor tolerance of side effects, PSA level, tumor size, etc. Typically chemotherapy is given every 3 weeks for 6-8 cycles.



## SIDE EFFECTS

Chemotherapy drugs target cancer cells by attacking cells that grow and divide quickly. Unfortunately, there are other cells in the body that can also be affected, including, red blood cells in the bone marrow, hair follicles, and cells in the mouth and intestines. The side effects of chemotherapy depend on the type and dose of drug given. These side effects are usually temporary and go away after treatment. Some common side effects include:

- Fatigue
- Nausea/vomiting
- Mouth sores
- Diarrhea
- Hair loss
- Low white blood cell count
- Increased risk of infection
- Weakness/numbness in fingers and toes

## HOW TO MANAGE SIDE EFFECTS

There are several ways to address the side effects of chemotherapy. It is important for patients to talk to their doctor about how they are feeling to ensure access to the various treatment options. Maintaining a healthy diet and engaging in vigorous exercise 3-4 times a week is one of the ways doctors suggest to fight these side effects.



*You Are Not Alone!*

*Each year, about 650,000 cancer patients receive chemotherapy in an outpatient oncology clinic in the United States.*