



What To Do For Yourself Through Chemotherapy

1. Drink at least 2 quarts (8 cups) of liquid every day. This can be water, juice, sports drinks (Gatorade, PowerAde, etc.), soda, tea, or coffee. **You should limit caffeine beverages to 1-2 per day.**
2. Gargle and swish with saline mouth rinse at least 4 times a day. If you wear dentures, remove them prior to mouth care. Recipe: Measure out 2 cups tap water and add 1 teaspoon salt. Make fresh saline solution daily. Do not use over-the-counter mouth washes that contain alcohol which can dry and crack your mouth. ***Continue to brush your teeth 3 times daily with a soft toothbrush.***
3. Make sure you have a bowel movement at least every other day so you do not become constipated. This is especially important if you are taking any kind of pain medication. Report if you have 5 or more watery stools (diarrhea) per day.
4. Be a good reporter. Let the doctor and nurses know what effects you are experiencing from the chemotherapy. You should phone the clinic if you are having problems after chemotherapy rather than waiting for your next appointment. ***Remember! There is a physician on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. For assistance, call the clinic at 728-2539.***
5. We advocate no special diet. Make healthy and balanced choices if possible and take in adequate calories to prevent weight loss. Repair of normal cells affected by chemotherapy requires adequate calories and protein.
6. Exercise is encouraged. Exercise helps maintain muscle tone and can be a strategy to reduce fatigue. Rest is also important and you need to plan your daily schedule accordingly.
7. Stay away from people with colds, flu, or other illnesses when your white blood cell count is low. ***Call the clinic at 728-2539 immediately, day or night, if you're temperature is 100.5°F and/or you have shaking chills.***
8. Chemotherapy can cause a temporary reduction of platelets which can result in bleeding. Please report to your physician ***any*** bleeding that does not stop after applying 10 minutes of pressure or if you have blood in your urine, stool, or vomit. Ask your physician before taking any aspirin or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medicines (Advil, Motrin, Aleve, and Naproxen).
9. If you have pets at home that are inclined to drink out of the toilet, be sure to flush the toilet twice as urine and stool may contain chemotherapy for several days after treatment.