

ORAL CHEMOTHERAPY EDUCATION



CATEGORIZING “CHEMO”

There are more than 200 different medications for cancer. Many people call all of these “chemo,” but there are actually many different types. You may hear some of the following terms:

Type of Treatment	Description	Examples
Chemotherapy <i>Other names:</i> chemo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kills fast-growing cells, including cancer cells Has been a key part of cancer treatment since the 1940s 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5-fluorouracil Capecitabine Carboplatin Doxorubicin Paclitaxel
Hormone therapy <i>Other names:</i> hormonal therapy, endocrine therapy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acts on hormones in the body to slow or stop cancer growth Used to treat breast, prostate, and neuroendocrine tumors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bicalutamide Letrozole Leuprolide Octreotide Tamoxifen
Targeted therapy <i>Other names:</i> tyrosine kinase inhibitor, kinase inhibitor, small molecule inhibitor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stops cancer growth by targeting its growth pathway Developed based on a better understanding of cancer and why it grows 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bevacizumab Imatinib Palbociclib Rituximab Trastuzumab Venetoclax
Immunotherapy <i>Other names:</i> immune therapy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helps your immune system to fight cancer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Atezolizumab Nivolumab Pembrolizumab Tisagenlecleucel
Radionuclides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kills cancer cells with radiation Similar to other types of radiation, but administered as a medication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Radium 223 Lutetium Lu 177 dotatate

All of these types of medications have a place in cancer treatment, and some medications fall into more than one of the categories above. The best treatment depends on cancer type, stage, and other factors. You may be treated with one type of medication, or multiple types combined.

For more information, talk to your healthcare team or go to www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/treatment/types.

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Additional instructions

Important notice: The Association of Community Cancer Centers (ACCC), Hematology/Oncology Pharmacy Association (HOPA), National Community Oncology Dispensing Association, Inc. (NCODA), and Oncology Nursing Society (ONS) have collaborated in gathering information for and developing this patient educational supplement. This summarized information represents a brief summary of supportive care information and other resources. This supplement does not cover all existing information related to the possible directions, doses, precautions, interactions, adverse effects, or risks associated with specific medication or adverse events and should not substitute for the advice of a qualified healthcare professional. Provision of this supplement is for informational purposes only and does not constitute or imply endorsement, recommendation, or favoring of this side effect management by ACCC, HOPA, NCODA, or ONS, who assume no liability for and cannot ensure the accuracy of the information presented. The collaborators are not making any representations with respect to the clinical information presented whatsoever, and any and all decisions, with respect to such patient management, are at the sole risk of the individual consuming the medication. All decisions related to education and managing adverse events should be made with the guidance and under the direction of a qualified healthcare professional.

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