

American Cancer Society Circle Of LifeSM : Cancer Education and Wellness

What to Expect during Cancer Treatment Fact Sheet



Photo courtesy of Mica Valdez

Finding out you have cancer presents many changes for you and your loved ones. Simply knowing what to expect can help you feel more in control and less worried about what lies ahead. We hope this information will help you and your family as you work through your fears and concerns about cancer and cancer treatment.

What to Expect during Cancer Treatment

- You may have many different emotions while going through cancer treatment.
- You may also have concerns about physical changes and side effects.
- Some people have side effects from cancer treatment while others don't have any.
- The severity of side effects of cancer treatment varies by type of treatment and from person to person. Talk with your cancer team about what to expect with your treatment.
- Bothering side effects from cancer treatment can almost always be controlled or managed with help from the cancer team. Keep them up to date with how you're doing and whether you need more help

Surgery may cause:

- Scarring, limitations to movement
- Swelling, pain, or fatigue
- Inability to do some activities for some time after surgery

Chemotherapy may cause:

- Nausea or vomiting
- Hair loss
- Bruising, bleeding, or infection
- Fatigue
- Forgetfulness, trouble concentrating

Radiation therapy may cause (depending on the part of the body being treated):

- Dry, irritated, or reddened skin
- Eating and digestive problems
- Nausea or vomiting
- Fatigue or weakness

If you would like more information about what to expect during cancer treatment, please visit cancer.org or call 1-800-227-2345.

