

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 (other names: 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 (5-FU®) Capecitabine (Xeloda®) Carboplatin (Paraplatin®) Doxorubicin (Adriamycin®) Paclitaxel (Taxol®) |
| Hormone therapy (other names: 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 (Casodex®) Letrozole (Femara®) Leuprolide (Lupron®, Eligard®) Octreotide (Sandostatin®) Tamoxifen (Nolvadex®) |
| Targeted therapy (other names: 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 (Avastin®) Imatinib (Gleevec®) Palbociclib (Ibrance®) Rituximab (Rituxan®) Trastuzumab (Herceptin®) Venetoclax (Venclexta®) |
| Immunotherapy (other names: immune therapy) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helps your immune system to fight cancer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Atezolizumab (Tecentriq®) Nivolumab (Opdivo®) Pembrolizumab (Keytruda®) Tisagenlecleucel (Kymriah®) |
| 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 (Xofigo®) Lutetium Lu 177 dotatate (Lutathera®) |

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
