

How to Categorize Cancer Drug Therapy

Some people think that the word "chemo" can be used to describe all cancer drugs, but that's not actually the case.

There are 4 main kinds of cancer drugs:

1. Chemotherapy ("chemo")
2. Immunotherapy
3. Hormonal therapy
4. Targeted therapy

Therapy Type	What it Does	Example Drugs
Chemotherapy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kills fast-growing cells 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5-fluorouracil Cisplatin Cyclophosphamide Doxorubicin Paclitaxel
Immunotherapy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helps your immune system to fight cancer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Axicabtagene ciloleucel Pembrolizumab Tarlatamab
Hormone Therapy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Works on hormones in the body to slow or stop cancer growth Used for breast cancer, prostate cancer, and neuroendocrine tumors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anastrozole Enzalutamide Leuprolide Octreotide Tamoxifen
Targeted Therapy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stops cancer growth by targeting its growth pathway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cabozantinib Imatinib Olaparib Trastuzumab

Other Cancer Medications

Some other types of cancer medications include:

- **Radioligand Therapy:**
 - **What it Does:** Sends a radioactive substance directly to cancer cells.
 - **Example Drugs:** Lutetium Lu 177 dotatate (Lutathera), Lutetium Lu 177 vipivotide tetraxetan (Pluvicto)
- **Antibody Drug Conjugate (ADC):**
 - **What it Does:** Uses an antibody like a "homing missile" to deliver powerful drugs directly to cancer cells. It's a mix of targeted and chemotherapy.
 - **Example Drugs:** Enfortumab vedotin (Padcev), Trastuzumab deruxtecan (Enhertu)

Key Takeaway

It's important to remember that "chemo" isn't a catch-all term for all cancer drugs. There are many different types of medications, each with its own way of fighting cancer.

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Important notice: The Association of Cancer Care Centers (ACCC), Hematology/Oncology Pharmacy Association (HOPA), Network for Collaborative Oncology Development & Advancement, Inc. (NCODA), and Oncology Nursing Society (ONS) have collaborated in gathering information for and developing this patient education guide. This guide represents a brief summary of the medication derived from information provided by the drug manufacturer and other resources.

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