Cancer Systemic Therapy: What You Need to Know
Class Overview

• Our class is designed to provide the following information:
  – Shared Services available to patients
  – Common side effects of chemotherapy
  – When to call your doctor
  – What to expect on your first day of chemotherapy
  – What to expect after each chemotherapy dose
  – Tour of infusion center
Contacting Your Provider

504-842-3910

• This is the main number. You will call this number with any problems, questions, or concerns.
• If it is after hours, please call the same number, there is always an oncologist on call. You can also call the nurse on call listed in your AVS summary for assistance.
• If it is an emergency, please go the nearest emergency room.
• If you cannot make an appointment, please call to reschedule & let us know.
Video Presentation

Watch Video
What is Chemotherapy?
• Chemotherapy is sometimes referred to as simply “chemo.” Chemotherapy is used most often to describe drugs that kill cancer cells directly. These are sometimes referred to as “anti-cancer” drugs or “antineoplastics”

What is Immunotherapy?
• Immunotherapy, or biologic therapy, treats cancer by activating or suppressing our own immune system

How is Chemotherapy/Immunotherapy Given?
• By Injection (into the fat or muscle)
• Orally
• Intravenously (through an IV in the arm or a port-a-cath)
• By pump (slowly over more than one day by a device attached to an IV or port-a-cath)
Video Highlights

• Head to Toe Side Effects
  – Hair loss
  – Skin & nail changes
  – Mouth sores, thrush
  – Taste bud changes
  – Nausea & Vomiting
  – Constipation
  – Diarrhea
  – Loss of appetite
  – Dehydration
  – Urinary problems
  – Peripheral neuropathy
  – Abnormal blood counts
  – Fatigue
  – Allergic reaction
  – Sexual dysfunction/infertility
  – Organ dysfunction

Symptom Tracker – page 19 of binder

---

Symptom Tracker

Use this list to indicate any symptoms you get and make notes of when it occurred and any other details. Bring this information to your next appointment or treatment session.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symptom</th>
<th>Date and Description of Problem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>abdominal pain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arm swelling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blood in stool/urine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bone pain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chest pain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>constipation/diarrhea</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cough</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dizziness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fever or chills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>headaches</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heart palpitations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hot flashes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>indigestion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leg swelling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>low energy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nausea/vomiting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>new lumps or redness on chest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>numbness or tingling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sexual difficulties</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shortness of breath</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sleeping difficulties</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>urinary burning/urgency/frequency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vision problems</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unusual pain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When to Call Your Doctor

- **Signs of infection**: Notify MD or report to nearest ER!
  - Fever of 100.4 for one hour
  - One time temperature of 101 or more
  - If instructed to go to ER, always inform nursing staff that you are an oncology patient receiving chemotherapy

- **Other common side effects** that warrant a call to doctor:
  - Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or constipation that lasts longer than 24 hours
  - Mouth sores
  - Uncontrolled pain
  - If you are unable to eat or drink for more than 24 hours
  - Extreme fatigue or weakness
  - Any bleeding
  - Rash
  - Swelling
  - Changes in mental status or confusion
  - **If you are experiencing shortness or breath or chest pain, please go to the ER immediately!**
Helpful Tips

• How to prevent infection
  – Good handwashing
  – Avoid people who are sick or have infections
  – If you start to feel bad, check your temperature & call if you have a fever > 100.4
  – Wash all fresh fruits & vegetables under cold running water & eat them at home.
  – No buffets, No raw seafood or sushi
  – If you have pets, let family or friends help clean up after them
  – If you work in your yard or garden, wear gardening gloved & use sunscreen
  – Avoid contact with children who have received live virus vaccines for 2 weeks.
Helpful Tips Continued…

• STAY Hydrated!! It is very important to drink lots of fluids when on chemotherapy. Strive for 60-80 ounces a day at least (unless you are on a fluid restriction)
• Alcohol consumption may or may not be prohibited, discuss with your doctor
• Maintain healthy diet
• Stay active, studies show that light exercise improves side effects from chemotherapy
• Important to discuss any recreational drug use with your doctor
Sexual Activity

• Kissing, hugging, touching & sexual activity is okay while you are on chemotherapy
• We ask that you practice safe sex using barrier protection
• Avoid pregnancy as chemotherapy can have harmful effects on a fetus

Safe Handling of Waste

• If you share a bathroom with others, please flush the toilet twice with the lid down for 48-72hrs after chemotherapy
• If you have vomiting or diarrhea and someone is helping to take care of you, we advise them to wear gloves
Infiltration/Extravasation

- Once your port is accessed or your IV is started, you should not feel any pain
- Chemotherapy does not hurt, burn, or cause swelling
- If for any reason it does, please inform the nurse immediately!!
- The nurses will always check for blood return, if unable to see this, they may give you a medication to help clear the line or they may send you for a dye study
- When not in use, ports should be flushed monthly until they are removed
What to Expect: First Day of Chemotherapy

• Will have labs and see your doctor prior to your chemo appointment
  – You may be able to have labs closer to home
  – The doctor will review your labs and any side effects before deciding whether to give your chemo as scheduled

• What to wear
• What to bring
• Check in on 5th floor
• Ride Home
• Duration of appointment will vary depending on regimen
• Review Infusion Suite Guidelines
What to Expect: After Chemotherapy

- Side Effects Timing
- Going in public places/interaction with others

Common Questions

- Can I eat whatever I want?
- Can I be around my kids and grandkids?
- Do I have to stop going out to dinner?
Survivorship After Cancer Care

- Once you enter the “survivorship” portion of your journey, some patients experience new challenges
  - Cancer treatments can have delayed or chronic effects that may not become apparent right away
- This is the time to schedule a survivorship visit with one of our midlevel providers
  - A survivorship care plan will be provided that provides a comprehensive look back at what you have accomplished, as well as ahead at what to expect in this next phase of cancer care
- This visit is incredibly important and can offer helpful resources that may be available to you after treatment is completed
Benson Cancer Center
Urgent Care

- Ochsner's Hematology and Oncology department offers same day or next day URGENT care visits to our active, established hematology and oncology patients.

- The ultimate goal of our specialized urgent care clinic is to improve the quality of cancer care we deliver, along with making those receiving treatment as stable as possible, and to reduce the burden of unplanned emergency events.

- Our URGENT care clinic is staffed primarily by the hematology and oncology Advanced Practice Providers (APPs) and is available Monday through Friday from 8am to 3pm. This is not a walk-in clinic and an appointment must be made.

- Please reach out to your provider via phone 504-842-3910 or MyChart message MYOCHSNER.com to be scheduled. If your MyChart message is not answered within 30 minutes, please do not hesitate to call to discuss your symptoms.

Which cancer patients are appropriate?

- Active treatment patients with urgent care needs such as:
  - Shortness of breath
  - Persistent Nausea and/or Vomiting
  - Dehydration
  - Persistent Diarrhea or constipation
  - Fever of 100.4 > 1 hour in duration or any isolated fever > 101
  - Rash
  - Severe pain or new onset pain not controlled by current medication regimen
  - Or any other symptom you feel is related to your current hematology or oncology treatment

- ED patients who can be released but need to be seen within 24-48 hours of their urgent needs.

- Hospital discharged patients who need rapid follow up within 7 days.

- Patients initially started on cancer related pain medication or who have a change in their pain medication regimen requiring rapid follow up.

- Symptoms requiring emergency care consists of, but are not limited to: Chest pain, numbness to face or in limbs, difficulty walking, difficulty speaking or breathing, loss of consciousness, intractable pain, coughing up or vomiting blood, blood in the stool.
Chemotherapy Care Companion

- **Free** program offered to all chemotherapy patients
- Kit can be picked up at any Obar
- Provided devices: BP Cuff, Scale, & Thermometer
- Log into MyOchsner and access tasks through the To-Do list
- You will receive Push Notifications when Tasks are due.
Advanced Directives

• Advance Directives allow you to make decisions about your medical care ahead of time if you can no longer speak for yourself. They consist of two main parts:
  – **Power of attorney for Healthcare Decisions**: this form allows you to name the person you want to make healthcare decisions for you when you are not able to make them for yourself
  – **Living Will**: this form allows you to state what you wish and do not wish to be done in the event you are unable to speak for yourself and have a terminal and irreversible condition.

• You can find Power of Attorney and Living Will documents in our MyOchsner account

Visit [www.PrepareForYourCare.org](http://www.PrepareForYourCare.org) or [www.theconversationproject.org](http://www.theconversationproject.org) to learn more.

You may also want to visit [www.ochsner.org/advancecareplanning](http://www.ochsner.org/advancecareplanning) for assistance.
Alternative Therapies and Medications

Some over-the-counter medications may affect how your chemo works in your body.

Always inform your doctor of any supplements or vitamins you are taking.

Some examples:
- Tumeric
- St. John’s Wort
- Multivitamins
Available Support Services
Dietician Information

An Oncology Dietician is available for all cancer patients being treated at Ochsner

- Common reasons to see a dietician during chemo:
  - Weight loss
  - Weight gain
  - Appetite changes
  - A change in your ability to eat/feed yourself

- A plan to accomplish your personalized nutrition goals will be developed and your ongoing progress will be monitored and evaluated

- To schedule a one-on-one appointment, ask your oncologist’s office or nurse navigator to place a referral order

**Website:**
https://www.ochsner.org/services/cancer-care/nutrition-support
Oncology Social Work

- Your oncology social worker is available for in person or phone consultation
- Resources they can provide to patient, family, and caregivers:
  - Transportation Support
  - Lodging
  - Financial Assistance
  - Support Group Information
  - Disability Information
  - Emotional Support
  - Medication Assistance Programs
  - Home Medical Equipment

Website: https://www.ochsner.org/services/cancer-care/social-workers
Oncology Psychology

• Psychologists dedicated to our cancer patients
• Available for one-on-one counseling appointments
• To schedule a one-on-one appointment, ask your oncologist’s office or nurse navigator to place a referral order
• Topics that can be discussed/treated include:
  ○ Anxiety
  ○ Depression
  ○ Insomnia
  ○ Family Dynamic Issues
Financial Assistance/Questions

• Oncology Financial Counselors
• Provides help with:
  – Billing questions/issues
  – Insurance cancer policies
  – Arrangement of Payment Plans
  – Financial Assistance Applications
• Phone Number: 504-842-2386
• Location: 1st floor Benson Cancer Center
• Enhances the quality of life through cancer treatment
• Focuses on the whole patient, not just the diagnosis
• Utilizes the 7 Pillars of Health to create a personalized treatment summary and follow up plan to support patients throughout their care continuum
• Services include:
  – Yoga
  – Acupuncture
  – Meditation
  – Tai Chi
  – Relaxation/Guided Imagery
  – Physical, occupational, speech therapy
  – Healing Arts
  – Massage
  – Nutritional services (weight management, etc.)
  – Psychology services
  – Navigation through the above care services
• Referral recommended prior to chemotherapy initiation to understand whether this service will be beneficial for you during treatment
Acupuncture

• Acupuncture is the use of small, painless needles that puncture certain areas of the skin. Sometimes the addition of electric is used (e-stim).
• It is a safe alternative to use for symptoms resulting from chemotherapy and radiation
• Ochsner has an acupuncturist specifically for their cancer patients

Benefits of acupuncture for chemotherapy patients are proven higher when treatment begins before first dose

Acupuncture has shown to be successful in treating:
1. Chemotherapy induced nausea & vomiting
2. Chemotherapy induced neuropathy
3. Chemotherapy/radiation pain
4. Hot flashes
5. Fatigue
6. Dry Mouth and more
Ochsner offers a Women’s Cancer Survivorship Program specializing in a personalized and comprehensive approach to moving from diagnosis to wellness. The Ochsner Baptist Women’s Wellness and Survivorship Center provides comprehensive coordinated care using a holistic approach for a women’s unique survivorship needs.

The team specializes in the following aspects of women’s wellness after a cancer diagnosis:

- Managing menopausal symptoms
- Fertility counseling
- Bone health
- Mindfulness counseling
- Body image counseling
- Sexual dysfunction such as low libido and painful intercourse
A Multi-Disciplinary Approach

Cancer treatment can lead to certain impairments and side effects that the Ochsner Therapy and Wellness Team can support you though! Below are some examples of how the multi-disciplinary program can help you!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Therapy</th>
<th>Occupational Therapy</th>
<th>Speech Therapy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prehab or Rehab</td>
<td>ADL training &amp; modifications</td>
<td>Cognitive deficits aka “brain fog”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening for weakness or debility</td>
<td>Transfer training</td>
<td>Changes in speech intelligibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve soft tissue mobility</td>
<td>Fine motor control</td>
<td>Voice changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatigue</td>
<td>Energy banking &amp; conservation techniques for fatigue management</td>
<td>Difficulty swallowing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance/proprrioception</td>
<td>Breathing techniques</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gait training</td>
<td>Stress management and mindfulness techniques</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breathing exercises/pulmonary hygiene</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OT – Therapeutic Yoga

• Therapeutic yoga is a type of therapy that combines physical exercises, breathing and other relaxation techniques to improve physical and mental health.

• Integrating the practice of yoga with traditional cancer care has been found to ease symptoms
  • Fatigue
  • deconditioning and joint pain
  • anxiety, stress and depression.

• The therapy sessions are in a quiet room and designed to meet your individual needs. This therapy is typically covered by all health insurance.

• Patient or someone on the medical team (with the patient’s permission) can register via phone call to Jennifer Mills (Lacy) at 504-842-3910
• Tuesday nights 5:30-6:30
• Class size limited to 12

Group Yoga

• Requires order for OT
• One hour sessions – generally for 10-20 sessions
• Individualized therapeutic yoga and meditation practice that meets their level of function and personal goals

Individual Therapeutic Yoga
Oncology Nurse Navigation

- Trained oncology nurses
- Maintain a consistent presence throughout your cancer treatment
- Provide Assistance with:
  - Initial scheduling
  - Care coordination
  - Disease and treatment education
- The Nurse Navigator for your specific cancer type can be reached by calling the main line at 504-842-3910
Additional Questions/Concerns?
Infusion Tour