

# QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR DOCTOR

## Chemotherapy and Side Effects

**Chemotherapy** uses drugs to kill cancer cells. It can stop the growth of a tumor in the breast and kill cancer cells that have spread to other parts of the body. A few of the drugs can be given by mouth but most are given by vein through an IV. Chemotherapy may be given before or after surgery.

You may feel overwhelmed and unsure of what to ask your doctor. Here are some questions to help start the conversation. More can be found [here](#).

---

**Q:** Will I need other treatments? Why do I need chemotherapy? When should I begin chemotherapy?

**A:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

---

**Q:** Is there a clinical trial I can join?

**A:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

---

**Q:** What were the estrogen receptor status and progesterone receptor status of my tumor? How do these affect my treatment plan?

**A:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

---

**Q:** Are there tumor profiling tests (like Oncotype DX<sup>®</sup>) that can be done on my tumor to help decide whether I should have chemotherapy?

**A:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

---

**Q:** What drugs will I take and why were those chosen for me?

**A:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

---

**Q:** How will the chemotherapy be given? How many treatments will I have?

**A:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Q: Where will the treatment take place? How long will each treatment take? Will I need someone to go with me?

A: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Q: What are the possible side effects? How long will they last? What are the long-term risks? Which side effects should I report to you?

A: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Q: Are there medicines I can take to prevent or treat side effects? Are there any complementary and integrative therapies that may help me cope with the side effects? Are there any I should avoid?

A: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Q: During treatment, will I be able to continue my normal activities (work, exercise, etc.)?

A: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Q: What out-of-pocket costs may I expect?

A: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Notes:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



For more information on breast health or breast cancer, please call the Komen Patient Care Center's Breast Care Helpline 1-877 GO KOMEN (1-877-465-6636) Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. ET and Friday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. ET or visit [komen.org](http://komen.org). Susan G. Komen does not provide medical advice.

**1-877 GO KOMEN (1-877-465-6636) [komen.org](http://komen.org)**