



NHS

Royal Berkshire
NHS Foundation Trust

What is chemotherapy?

A guide for young people

This leaflet explains what chemotherapy is to help you understand what will happen to you when you come into hospital.

What is chemotherapy?

Chemotherapy is a powerful medicine for cancer. 'Chemo' means chemical and 'therapy' means treatment – people often just call it chemo for short. The chemo is put into the Hickman line (wiggly) and it flows all round your body. Sometimes, it is given as an injection into your muscles or you have to take it by mouth.



How does chemo work?

Chemo works by killing any cells that grow fast. The medicines you are getting kill the cancer cells.

By killing all cells that grow fast, sometimes chemo mistakes some of the good cells in your body for cancer cells. This can cause side effects, like feeling sick, losing your hair and feeling really tired.

You may also need blood and platelet transfusions. This is done as a day case and you can go home once the transfusion is complete.

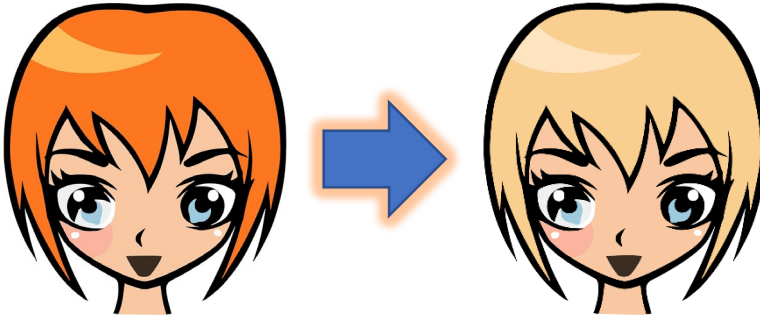
If you get a fever while you are neutropenic, you might have to be admitted to hospital as you are at an increased risk for infections.

We will give you intravenous antibiotics in case you have an infection for at least 48 hours.

Hair loss

Did you know? If you lose your hair after having chemotherapy, it might grow back a different colour!

These effects won't last after you stop having chemo and your hair will grow back!



Further concerns and questions

If you are worried about anything to do with your chemo, talk to your nurse or doctor – they will be happy to help you.

Contacting us

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To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

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Reviewed: November 2023

Next review due: November 2025