

Health Bulletin



Is Chemo Making You Sick? You Don't Have To Suffer

(NAPSA)—For many cancer patients, nausea and vomiting are a familiar part of the chemotherapy routine. What may seem like common side effects, however, can have serious implications. Chemo-therapy-induced nausea and vomiting can lead to depression and fatigue at a time when patients need energy to focus on getting well. It can also prevent patients from getting the proper nutrition, which may interfere with overall health or even cause their condition to worsen. Fortunately, medicines called anti-emetics are available to help ensure that nausea and vomiting are no longer a given during chemotherapy.

"I make it a point to discuss anti-emetics with patients before chemotherapy in order to help prevent nausea and vomiting from the very first cycle," said Lee Schwartzberg, M.D., clinical oncologist and professor of medicine at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center. "It is important that patients feel comfortable and work closely with their oncology teams to find solutions that are right for them." There is even a new resource—Pathways to Prevention—dedicated to helping patients and caregivers learn how to discuss this issue with their oncology team.

Although it is impossible to know exactly who will experience nausea and vomiting caused by chemo, certain patients are at higher risk. These include people under age 50, women, those with certain types of cancer, and patients who have previously experienced chemo-induced nausea and



Many cancer patients are getting online help, opening the door to less discomfort and better personalized care.

vomiting. High anxiety levels—a normal response to cancer treatment—may also increase one's risk for nausea and vomiting. The type and/or combination of chemotherapy received can also impact the occurrence and severity of nausea and vomiting.

"Treatments to help prevent nausea and vomiting made all the difference during chemotherapy. I was able to hope, not only for a cure, but for the strength to withstand treatment," said cancer survivor and award-winning medical writer Maris Schilling. "I encourage all cancer patients to advocate for themselves to ensure they receive the best treatment and the support they need to fight their cancer."

Experts agree that prevention is the best way to treat nausea and vomiting. For more information on chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting and helpful tools and hints for discussing them with oncology specialists, visit www.PathwaysToPrevention.com.