



CANCER
INFAMILY
— build knowledge



MENSTRUAL IRREGULARITIES

This leaflet discusses alterations in the menstrual cycle and menopause that can occur with chemotherapy or hormonal therapy. Ask your doctor if you are at risk of these side effects with your treatment(s).

PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLETS ARE NOT MEANT TO REPLACE THE INFORMATION, ADVICE AND SUPPORT PROVIDED BY YOUR DOCTOR.

Menstrual irregularities and menopause

Chemotherapy and hormonal therapy can cause irregular menstruations or premature menopause.

This can happen during or after the treatment.



Some cancer treatments can cause premature menopause or temporary menopause-like symptoms such as hot flashes, burning, dryness or irritation of the vagina. They can also make you more prone to vaginal infections.

To help you dealing with these issues,
follow the guidelines below:

To prevent infection:

- ✘ Avoid oil-based lubricants (such as petroleum jelly or lotions).
- ✘ Always use a condom.
- ✘ Choose cotton underwear and tights.
- ✘ Avoid wearing tight pants or shorts.
- ✘ Avoid very sweet foods as these favor fungus growth, especially if you are diabetic.

Your doctor may also prescribe a vaginal cream or vaginal suppository (also called cones) to reduce the chance of infection. If you really have an infection, it should be treated right away.

If you have hot flashes:

- ✘ Do not take medicinal herbs, such as primrose oil or red clover, before talking to your doctor (they can mimic estrogen and stimulate breast cancer growth).
- ✘ Avoid very hot foods or drinks, spicy foods, caffeine or alcohol.

If you have vaginal dryness:

- ✘ Use a moisturizer – it can help relieving vaginal dryness.
- ✘ If sex becomes uncomfortable, use a water-based lubricant.
- ✘ Do not use lubricants that increase the skin's heat, have color, taste or bactericide – these might irritate the vagina.

Discuss with your doctor
or nurse how to treat
or alleviate menopause
symptoms.





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