

Patient Comfort Booklet

Your healthcare team will discuss the list below in order to prevent or relieve some of the symptoms and side effects you may experience when receiving treatment for cancer.



Bottled water

It is important to drink plenty of fluid when getting treatment. Fluids assist with flushing out toxins from your body, keeping your mucous membranes (cells that line your nose, mouth, throat) moist, and supporting the growth of healthy cells. Take small, frequent sips of water or non-caffeinated, non-alcoholic, non-carbonated fluids.

Non-carbonated sports drink (Gatorade®/Powerade®)

Non-carbonated sports drinks contain important electrolytes that assist the body with its normal functions.

Oral electrolyte maintenance solution (Pedialyte®)

Some cancers and/or cancer treatments may cause diarrhea, which may lead to your body losing important fluid (dehydration) and electrolytes. Oral electrolyte maintenance solutions contain less sugar than sports drinks.

Loperamide (Immodium®)

Diarrhea can lead to dehydration and low electrolytes. It is important to have anti-diarrhea medicine in your home. If you do develop diarrhea, call your healthcare team for instructions. You may need to provide a stool sample for testing.

Ice pops

Ice pops are helpful if you are unable to tolerate solid foods because of mouth sores, nausea or diarrhea.

Gelatin (Jello®)

Gelatin can be counted toward your fluid intake for the day. It may be helpful if you have mouth sores, nausea, or are unable to tolerate solid foods.



Fruits and vegetables

Fruits and vegetables may have bacteria and other germs on them because of handling, transporting, or sitting on the shelf for long periods of time. When receiving cancer treatment, it is important to remain free from infection. Wash fresh fruits and vegetables thoroughly. You may use a white vinegar rinse. Rinse well with water.

Hand washing

It is important to wash your hands frequently. Using soap and water for at least 20 seconds will kill many of the germs that may cause infection.

No-rinse liquid hand sanitizer

If soap and water are not available, use a liquid hand sanitizer. Rub your hands together until dry.

Baby shampoo

It is recommended that you wash your hair less often (every other day) with a mild shampoo. Baby shampoo is not as harsh as regular shampoo.

Hair conditioner

Some cancer treatments may cause hair loss or hair thinning. Using a conditioner helps keep the strands of hair in their best condition by preventing dry, split ends.



Vented hair brush

Brush your hair less often; use a vented brush or use your fingers. Air-dry your hair when possible, and avoid hair-dryers, curling irons/straighteners, and rollers.

Satin pillowcase

Sleep on a satin pillowcase during the period of time when hair begins to fall out as it is gentle on a tender scalp.

Digital thermometer

Keep an oral digital thermometer or a temporal/forehead thermometer in the house.

Ear thermometers have been found to be inaccurate. Signs of infection are fever/chills and/or sweats. Remember to take your temperature as soon as possible if you experience any of these symptoms. You should immediately call your healthcare team if your temperature is 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or greater.

Acetaminophen

Patients may experience flu-like symptoms while undergoing treatment. If directed by your healthcare team, you can take Tylenol® Regular Strength (2 tablets every 4 hours) or Tylenol® Extra Strength (2 tablets every 6 hours). If you have a fever, DO NOT take Tylenol® unless directed by your healthcare team.



Liquid antacid (Maalox®, Mylanta®)

Some treatments and medicines may cause heartburn or an upset stomach. Liquid antacids may relieve heartburn or burning sensation in your throat, chest, and/or stomach. Discuss taking liquid antacids with your healthcare team.



Seasoning blends

Foods may not taste the same while undergoing treatment. Adding seasoning may help to improve taste, but be careful of the salt content.



Standard multivitamins

A standard multivitamin may assist with keeping your body in its best condition. Discuss taking a multivitamin with your healthcare team.

Sugar-free hard candies (lemon/peppermints) and sugar-free gum

People receiving treatment may experience a metal, cotton, or cardboard taste in the mouth. Sucking on lemon or peppermint hard candies or chewing sugar-free gum may help decrease bad taste.

Saline nasal spray

Use a saline nasal spray if your nose becomes dry and sore. You can also use a humidifier at night to keep the air moist while sleeping.

Extra-soft toothbrush

You may notice that your gums are very sensitive or sore. Use an extra-soft toothbrush to prevent bleeding or damage to the gums.

Toothpaste with baking soda

Baking soda keeps the mouth clean. Toothpaste with baking soda may promote a clean mouth and may be less irritating than standard toothpastes. Brush your teeth at least 2-3 times a day.

Baking soda and salt rinse

In order to keep the mouth clean and moist, swish with a baking soda and salt solution 5-6 times daily for 1-2 minutes each time. Mix 1 teaspoon of baking soda and 1 teaspoon of salt in 1 quart of water. **Do not swallow the solution. Avoid using alcohol-based mouthwash.**



Lip moisturizer

Your lips may become dry, cracked, or sore during cancer treatment. Apply a lip moisturizer frequently, such as lip balm, to keep lips moist.

Sunblock with SPF 30

Your skin may become especially sensitive while receiving certain cancer treatments. It is important to use a sunblock to avoid damage from the sun's harsh rays. Apply a sunblock with a SPF of 30 or greater every day when going outside, even during the winter months.

Body-moisturizing lotion

Many people receiving treatments develop dry, flaky, or cracked skin. Use an unscented lanolin free moisturizer daily. Some recommended lotions include Aveeno®, Eucerin®, Neutrogena® or Cetaphil®. **Avoid applying lotion to open areas of the skin.**



Moisturizing bar soap for sensitive skin

To help minimize dry, flaky, or cracked skin, use a moisturizing bath soap when bathing. Soap for sensitive skin may also be helpful to prevent skin problems, such as rashes. Some recommended soaps include baby soap, Neutrogena®, Dove®, Basis® or Cetaphil®. **Avoid soap that contains alcohol.**

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