

Kidney and Bladder Effects

Some anticancer drugs can irritate the bladder or cause temporary or permanent damage to the kidneys. Be sure to ask your doctor if your anticancer drugs are among the ones that have this effect, and notify the doctor if you have any symptoms that might indicate a problem. Signs to watch for include:

- Pain or burning when you urinate.
- Frequent urination.
- Not being able to urinate
- A feeling that you must urinate right away ("urgency").
- Reddish or bloody urine.
- Fever.
- Chills, especially shaking chills.

In general, it's a good idea to drink plenty of fluids to ensure good urine flow and help prevent problems; this is especially important if your drugs are among those that affect the kidney and bladder. Water, juice, coffee, tea, soup, soft drinks, broth, ice cream, soup, Popsicles, and gelatine are all considered fluids. Your doctor will let you know if you must increase your fluid intake.

You also should be aware that some anticancer drugs cause the urine to change colour (orange, red, or yellow) or to take on a strong or medicine-like odour for 24 – 72 hours. The colour and odour of semen may be affected, as well. Check with your doctor to see if the drugs you are taking have this effect.

Some anticancer drugs can irritate the bladder or cause temporary or permanent damage to the bladder or kidneys. If you are taking one or more of these drugs, your doctor may ask you to collect a 24-hour urine sample. A blood sample may also be obtained before you begin chemotherapy to check your kidney function. Always drink plenty of fluids to ensure good urine flow and help prevent problems. This is very important if you are taking drugs that affect the kidney and bladder. Consult your doctor straight away.

Flu-Like Syndrome

Some people report feeling as though they have the flu a few hours to a few days after chemotherapy. Flu-like symptoms--muscle aches, headache, tiredness, nausea, slight fever, chills, and poor appetite--may last from 1 to 3 days. These symptoms also can be caused by an infection or by the cancer itself, so it's important to check with your doctor if you have flu-like symptoms.

Fluid Retention

Your body may retain fluid when you are having chemotherapy. This may be due to hormonal changes from your therapy, to the effects of the drugs themselves, or to your cancer. Check with your doctor or nurse if you notice swelling or puffiness in your face, hands, feet, or abdomen. You may need to avoid table salt and foods with a high sodium content. If the problem is severe, your doctor may prescribe diuretics, medicine to help your body get rid of excess fluids. However, don't take any over-the-counter diuretics without asking your doctor first.