Questions to Ask Your Doctor about Chemotherapy for Breast Cancer

Patient Information about Breast Cancer
http://www.oncologychannel.com/patient-information-breast-cancer/chemotherapy.shtml

Chemotherapy uses a combination of drugs to destroy cancer cells. This treatment may be administered prior to breast cancer surgery to shrink the tumor (called neoadjuvant therapy), or after surgery to treat breast cancer that has spread to the lymph nodes (called adjuvant therapy).

Chemotherapy drugs may be administered orally or through an IV (intravenously). In some cases, a port (also called a port-a-cath) is surgically implanted in a large vein in the upper chest to make the administration of chemotherapy easier.

Chemotherapy is a systemic treatment, which means that it travels throughout the body via the bloodstream. Although chemotherapy side effects often are severe, they usually can be controlled.

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- ☐ Why has chemotherapy been recommended to treat my breast cancer?
- ☐ What type of chemotherapy regimen do you recommend?
- ☐ Are there any clinical trials available? Do you recommend I enlist in one of these trials? Why or why not?
- ☐ Will I receive dense-dose chemotherapy? Why or why not?
- ☐ What will be my chemotherapy schedule?
- ☐ How will chemotherapy be administered?
- ☐ Will I have an intravenous port (e.g., port-a-cath)? If so, what does this involve?
- ☐ How long will each treatment take?
- ☐ In addition to the chemotherapy drugs, what other types of medications will be prescribed during treatment?
- ☐ What are the short-term and long-term side effects of this type of chemotherapy?
- ☐ Will chemotherapy cause me to lose my hair? Will the cost of a wig be covered by my insurance?

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- ☐ May this treatment cause menopause?
- ☐ How can I reduce the adverse effects associated with treatment?
- ☐ How can I expect to feel during chemotherapy? Can I continue my normal daily routine?
- ☐ What are the potential severe side effects of this chemotherapy?
- ☐ Who should I contact if I experience complications during treatment?
  Telephone number to call:
- ☐ How will my condition be monitored during chemotherapy? Will I require regular blood tests or other tests?
- ☐ If I become ill during chemotherapy, how may this affect my treatment? What effect will an interruption in therapy have on my overall treatment?
- ☐ What type of follow-up care will I receive after chemotherapy for breast cancer?

Notes/Additional Information

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