



## Managing the Common Side Effects of Cancer Treatment

Below are some helpful tips to manage some of the most common treatment-related side effects. Everyone's experience is different, always reach out to your doctor or Onco360 if symptoms worsen or start to interfere with your daily life.

### Constipation

- Drink plenty of water and eat fiber-rich foods.
- Gentle exercise everyday can help stimulate digestion.
- Osmotic or stimulant laxatives, stool softeners, enemas, and/or certain prescription medications may be used if recommended by your care team.

### Loss of Appetite/Weight Changes

- Choose calorie- and protein-dense foods such as yogurt, cheese, eggs, and salmon.
- Try nutritional meal-replacement drinks (e.g. Boost® or Ensure®) to help maintain strength.
- Keep a food diary to keep track of what you eat each day, when you are eating, and how much you are eating.
- Gentle exercise can help stimulate appetite.

### Taste Changes and Nausea

- Eat small, frequent meals throughout the day.
- Experiment with flavors such as ginger or peppermint.
- Avoid greasy, spicy, or strong-smelling foods.
- Take anti-nausea medications as prescribed.

### Diarrhea

- Drink 8-10 cups of water or other non-caffeinated beverages each day.
- Follow the BRAT diet (bananas, rice, applesauce, toast).
- Avoid caffeine, dairy, and alcohol.
- An over the counter anti-diarrheal such as Loperamide may be used. Contact your doctor if it lasts more than two days.

### Fatigue or Weakness

- Plan physical activities for when you have the most energy.
- Light exercise such as cardiovascular endurance (walking, jogging, or swimming), resistance (weight) training, and yoga can help.
- Rest when your body needs it.

## Headache

- Rest in a quiet, dimly lit room.
- Listening to relaxing or soothing music, can help you relax.
- Use a cold washcloth, heating pad, or even massage therapy.
- Stay well hydrated.

## Musculoskeletal Pain

- Try topical, over-the-counter creams, ointments, or patches for pain relief (e.g. IcyHot<sup>®</sup>, Bengay<sup>®</sup>, Salonpas<sup>®</sup>).
- Alternative medicine practices such as massage, acupuncture, meditation, reflexology, or chiropractic may provide relief.

## Mouth Sores (Mucositis) and Dry Mouth

- Maintain good oral hygiene.
- Avoid alcohol and acidic or spicy foods.

## Neuropathy (Tingling, Numbness, Burning)

- Keep hands and feet warm.
- Wear supportive shoes.
- Avoid going barefoot.

## Skin and Nail Changes/Hand/Foot Skin Reactions (HFSR/HFS)

- Moisturize regularly with fragrance-free lotions.
- Avoid hot water, tight shoes, or friction.
- Wear soft cotton socks or gloves for comfort and protection.
- Use cushioned insoles or add foam-type absorbing soles and shock absorbers to relieve pressure points.

## Emotional and Cognitive Changes (“Chemo Brain”)

- Practice deep breathing, mindfulness, or guided meditation.
- Join a support group or talk to a counselor.
- Seek out a support group to help build connection and community.

If you have any questions or concerns, **contact Onco360 at 877.662.6633**. We're here to support you through every step of your treatment journey.