

# Neuropathy

Chemotherapy can cause damage to your nerves, which is a condition called neuropathy. The type of neuropathy that affects the sensory areas of the body is called peripheral neuropathy. Neuropathy can begin any time after your first treatment. Sometimes it gets worse as treatments go on. Neuropathy can be short-term, fade over a year or two after treatment ends or may last for the rest of your life.

## Common symptoms of neuropathy:

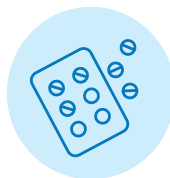
- Pain, tingling, burning, “pins and needles”
- Weakness or numbness in your hands or feet
- Losing your balance or feeling clumsy
- Tripping or stumbling while walking
- Feeling colder than you used to
- Trouble picking up objects or buttoning your clothes

## What you can do

- Talk to your doctor about medications to help with pain or discomfort.
- Neuropathy can make it hard to feel when water is too hot. Consider turning down your water heater in your home to avoid burning yourself when using hot water.
- Be careful when handling knives, scissors or other sharp objects, since you may not feel it if you cut yourself.
- Wear sneakers or well-fitting shoes with rubber soles to protect your feet.
- Check your feet daily to see if you have any sores or redness.
- Do not drink alcohol. It can make neuropathy worse.
- Steady yourself when you walk by using a cane or other device.
- Ask your nurse about cold therapies to hands and feet during infusion.
- If you have diabetes, control your blood sugar. High blood sugar levels can damage nerves.
- Avoid things that seem to make your neuropathy worse, such as hot or cold temperatures, or snug clothes or shoes.

## Treatments

- Medications
- Occupational therapy
- Physical therapy and exercise
- Relaxation therapy
- Talking to your health care team about other options that may work for you



## When to call your doctor or nurse

- If you have any signs of neuropathy. Early communication will help the health care team partner with you to watch for signs of neuropathy getting worse.