**Patient information**

**For those of you who are undergoing chemotherapy for gynaecological cancer**

Chemotherapy (cytostatic treatment) is a collective term for a group of drugs that can inhibit or kill cancer cells.

**The goal of the treatment varies**

* Full recovery (curative)
* Prevent recurrence following surgery if there should be any remaining cancer cells
* Reduce the size of the tumour before surgery
* Life-prolonging or relief from symptoms (palliation)

**How does the treatment work?**The chemotherapy is given intravenously (into a vein), along with other medications that counteract nausea and allergy. 2 types of chemotherapy may often be combined in the same treatment. Your doctor has determined what type of treatment you will receive. A nurse administers the treatment and will be present the whole time.

**Side effects**

* Allergic reactions

Rash, nausea, feeling unwell, and a drop in blood pressure. We have medications for these reactions, and the chemotherapy will often be continued after treating them.

* Nausea, vomiting

This may last from a few hours up to several days. Often the preventive treatment will reduce the degree of nausea.

* Fever

This may be a sign of infection. If you have a temperature over 38 degrees, you must contact the department.

* Hair loss

Some chemotherapy treatments lead to hair loss. Usually the hair will grow back after the treatment is over. You can receive a requisition for a wig.

* Bowel function

Constipation or diarrhoea.

* A sore mouth and dental problems due to the effect on the mucous membranes.

Some chemotherapy has specific side effects. You will be informed about these.

**The impact on bone marrow**Chemotherapy influences the production of blood cells in the bone marrow; blood tests are therefore taken before every treatment:

* Low blood count occurs when the production of red blood cells drops. Blood transfusion may be necessary.
* Low white blood cell count increases the risk of infections.
* Low platelet count can lead to bleeding, especially from the nose and mouth, as well as "bruises".

A selection of other blood tests will also be taken. If any of the results are not satisfactory, the treatment may be delayed and/or the dose of chemotherapy reduced.

**General information about treatment**

* Physical activity between treatments is positive. Tailor your exercise regime according to how you are feeling. " Live as normally as possible"
* If you have questions about nutrition, you can inquire at the outpatient's clinic. There are information leaflets on dietary advice. You should drink plenty of fluids to flush out the by-products. Referral to a nutritionist may be necessary.
* If you wish to use alternative or complementary treatments, some of these may be inadvisable in combination with chemotherapy. It is important to inform the doctor in charge of treatment of any such usage.

Please see also the information sheet about the period following chemotherapy, written by the Women's Clinic/SUS:

[Pasientinformasjon til deg som har fått cellegift mot gynekologisk kreft](http://eqs-kk.sus.no/exportKK/docs/doc_15556/index.html)

Patient information for those of you who have had chemotherapy for gynaecological cancer

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