

## Side Effects - Anemia

Anemia is a condition that can make you feel short of breath, tired and lightheaded. Other signs of anemia may include feeling dizzy or faint, headaches, a fast heartbeat and/or pale skin.

Cancer treatments, such as chemotherapy and radiation therapy, or cancers that affect the bone marrow, can cause anemia. When you are anemic, your body does not have enough red blood cells to carry oxygen from the lungs throughout your body to help it work properly. You will have blood tests to check for anemia. Treatment for anemia is based on symptoms and cause of anemia.

### Here are some steps you can take if you have fatigue caused by anemia:

- **Save your energy and ask for help.** Choose the most important things to do each day. If someone offers to help, let them. They can take you to appointments, make meals or do other things for you.
- **Balance rest with activity.** Take short naps during the day, but keep in mind that too much bed rest can make you feel weak. You may feel better if you take short walks or exercise a little.
- **Eat and drink well.** Talk with your provider, nurse or an oncology dietitian to learn what foods and drinks are best for you. You may need to eat foods that are high in protein or iron.

### Talk with your health care team

- What is causing the anemia?
- What problems should I call you about?
- What steps can I take to feel better?
- Would medicine, iron pills, a blood transfusion or other treatments help me?
- Is there a registered dietitian who could also give me advice?

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Tell your doctor if you are extremely tired or have other signs of anemia. There are treatments that may help.