

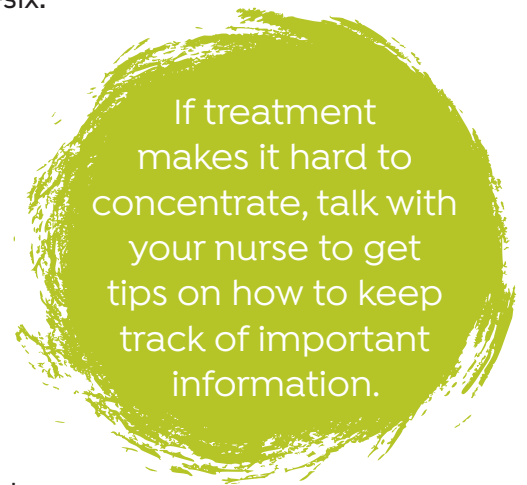
Side Effects - **Concentration or memory problems (chemo brain)**

Some cancer treatments may cause difficulty with thinking, concentrating or remembering things. These problems are sometimes described as “chemo brain.” These effects can begin during or after cancer treatment or may not appear until later. They don’t always go away. Some people notice small changes, such as a bit more difficulty remembering things, whereas others have much greater memory or concentration problems.

Some ideas for improving memory and concentration

Cancer survivors have found many ways to help improve their memory after cancer treatment:

- **Jot it down.** Write down each task, plan your whole day and be realistic.
- **Set up reminders.** Put small signs around the house to remind you of things to do.
- **Group long numbers into chunks.** For example, the phone number 812-5846 can be repeated as “eight-twelve, fifty-eight, forty-six.”
- **Talk yourself through tasks.** When doing a task with many steps, such as cooking whisper each step to yourself.
- **Manage stress.** Managing stress better may improve your memory and attention. Learning how to relax can help you remain calm even in stressful moments.
- **Go over what you plan to say.** Before you go to family events or work functions, go over names, dates and key points you want to make.
- **Repeat what you want to remember.** Saying it a couple of times can help.
- **Exercise your body and mind.** Light physical exercises may be helpful. Mind-body practices such as meditation or mental exercises such as puzzles or games may help.
- **Plan your day.** Do things that need the most concentration at the time of day when you feel best. Get extra rest and plenty of sleep at night. If you need to rest during the day, short naps of less than one hour are best.



Talk with your health care team

- Seeing a specialist
- Medicines you are taking and whether they could be causing or adding to your problem
- Depression or anxiety as these problems can affect attention, concentration and memory
- Menopause as it can cause some memory and concentration problems
