

A patient's guide to Immuno-Oncology in Blood Cancers

Things you need to know about immunotherapy in blood cancers

You may already know about some of the treatment options available for blood cancers, such as chemotherapy, radiation, targeted therapy or stem cell transplant. With advances in science, there's now another way to treat certain cancers: **immuno-oncology**.

Immuno-oncology uses drugs known as immunotherapies to help your body's immune system fight cancer. 'Immuno' in immuno-oncology refers to your immune system. The immune system is your body's natural defense against illness and disease such as cancer.

This guide will help you understand immunotherapy. Keep this for your reference. We've provided blank space for you to take notes and write down any questions you may have as you read through the guide.

The topics we cover in this guide include:

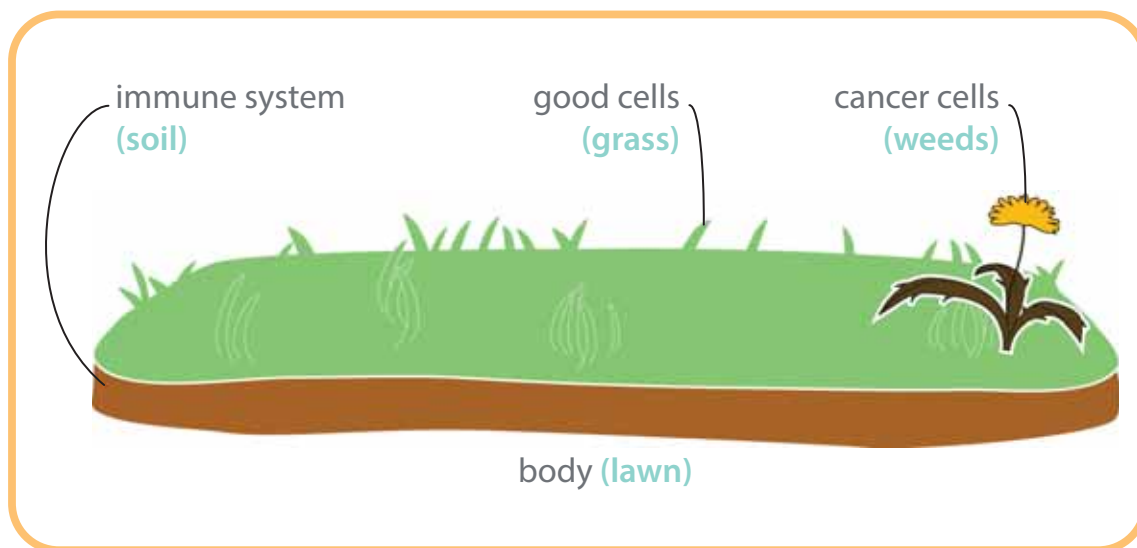
- How does immunotherapy work with my immune system to fight cancer?
- How is immunotherapy different from other types of cancer treatment?
- What side effects should I expect when taking immunotherapy?
- What can I do to play an active role in treatment?
- Is it normal to feel this way?
- What can I do to cope?
- Where can I get more information about immunotherapy?



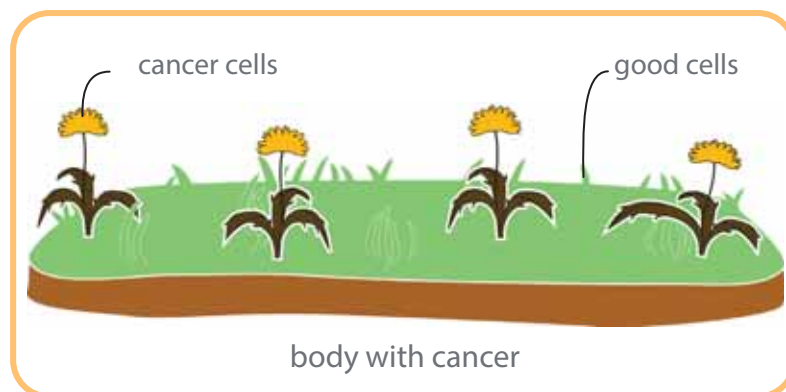
How does immunotherapy work with my immune system to fight cancer?

Immunotherapy uses your body's own immune system to help fight cancer. Here's an analogy to explain the concept:

Imagine your body as a lawn, where the soil is your immune system. When you're healthy, the soil is rich and well tended, and the lawn is green. Normally, the soil is able to prevent weeds from growing out of control.

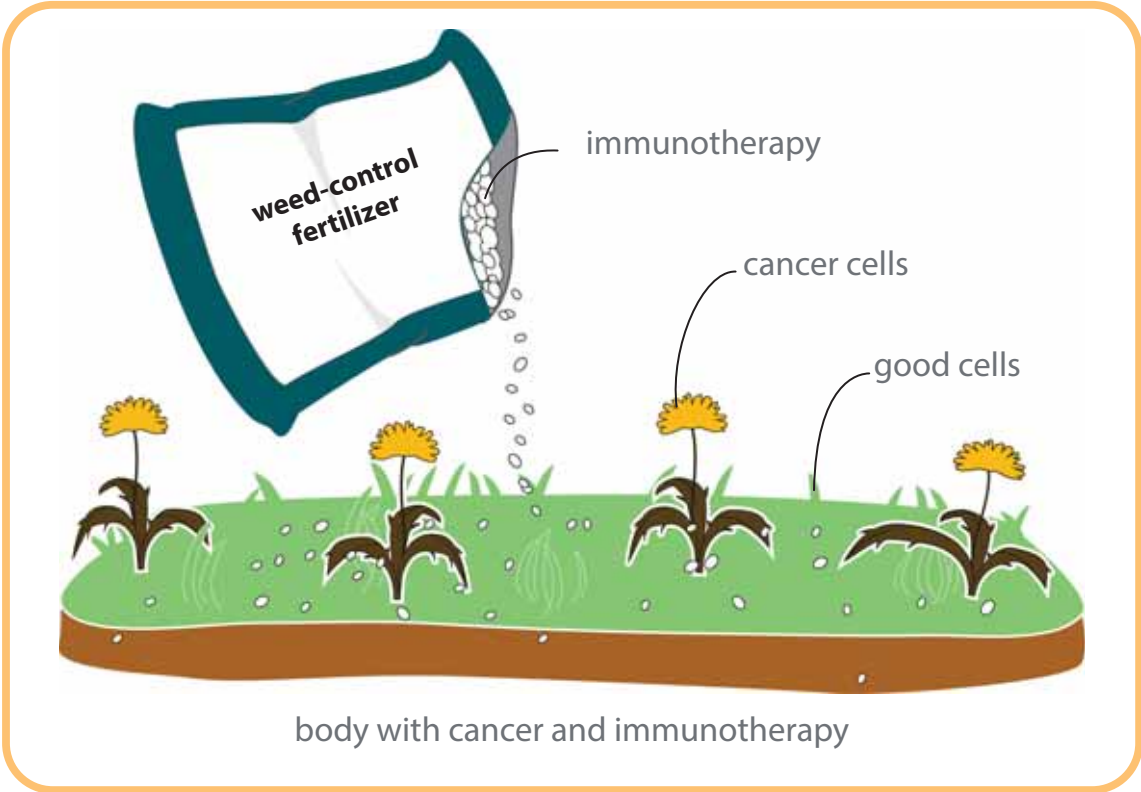


Cancer cells are like weeds in your lawn. Sometimes the soil can allow weeds to grow and spread, and soon, the entire lawn suffers as your grass competes for space and nutrients.

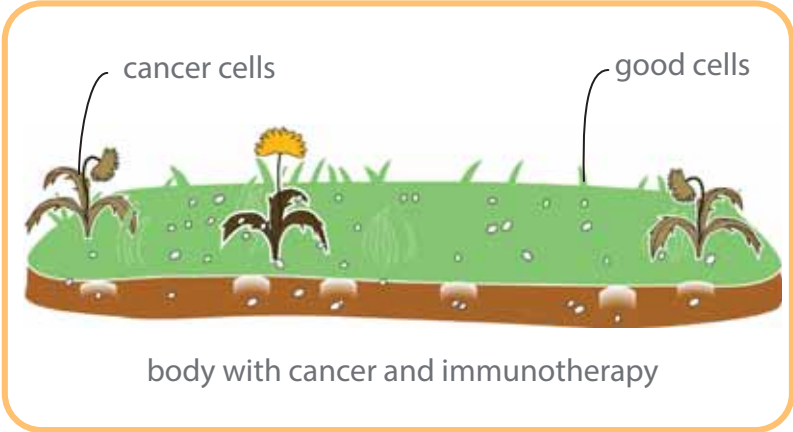


How does immunotherapy work with my immune system to fight cancer?

Immunotherapies are like adding weed-control fertilizer to the soil. It enriches the lawn's existing soil.



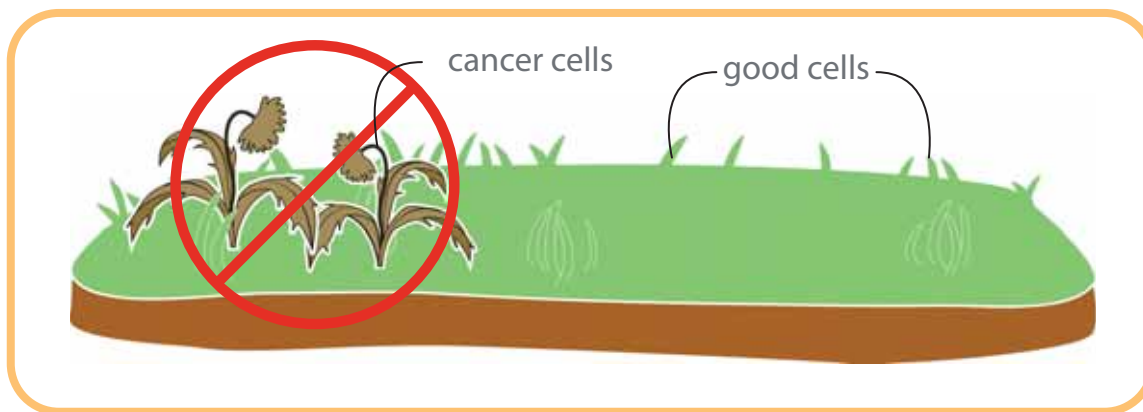
Now the soil can help keep the weeds under control and can maintain the lawn's health.



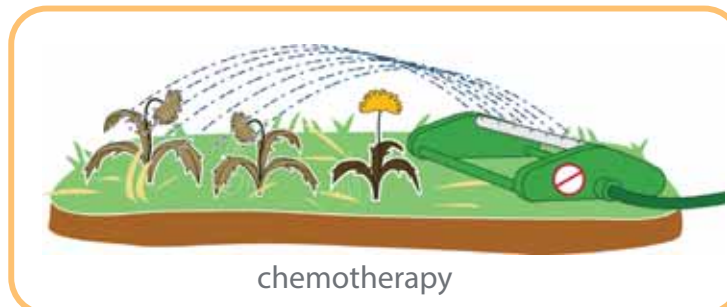
How is immunotherapy different from other types of cancer treatment?

Immunotherapy is a unique approach that uses the body's immune system to help fight cancer. To understand how immunotherapy is different from other treatments, let's revisit the lawn analogy.

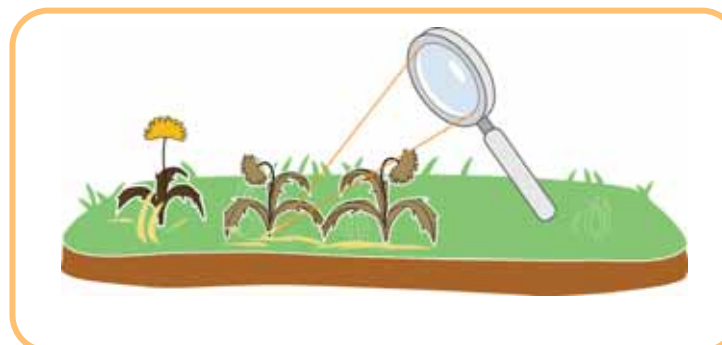
If your body is like a lawn, you and your healthcare team will decide on how to remove the weeds (cancer cells) while doing a lesser amount of damage to the grass (good cells).



Chemotherapy is like spraying a general weed killer on the whole lawn. This approach may not kill all the weeds and may also harm some grass.



Radiation is like increasing the power of the sun with a magnifying glass to target and dry the weeds out, but in the process, some of the grass can also be damaged.

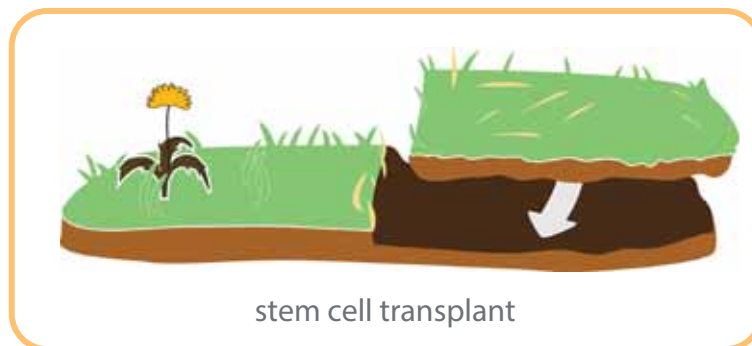


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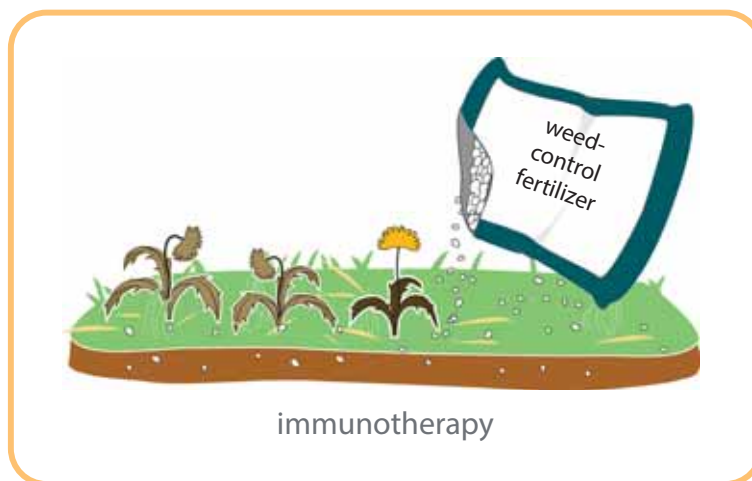
With targeted therapy, weeds are directly sprayed with weed killer. Grass may still be damaged.



A stem cell transplant is like putting a patch of healthy new lawn into your existing lawn to help with weed control. However, new grass may not grow in the transplanted section.



Instead of targeting the weeds, immunotherapy is like adding a weed-control fertilizer to the soil. This fertilizer enriches the soil to help control weeds, which in turn restores the health of your lawn. But too much fertilizer in the soil might harm your lawn.



Ask your healthcare team about the different treatment options available to you.

What side effects should I expect when taking immunotherapy?

The side effects you may feel will depend on the immunotherapy you are taking and how your immune system reacts to that treatment. Since your immune system takes care of your whole body, side effects can happen in many organs. Some of these side effects may be serious.



It is important to tell your healthcare team if you feel unwell. No one knows your body better than you. Keep track of your symptoms and update your healthcare team about any changes that are new, different or bothersome.



Your healthcare team will have a better idea of what side effects you may experience. Ask your healthcare team for a list of side effects so you can recognize them as soon as they come up, and you can contact your healthcare provider.

Side effects may happen during or after immunotherapy treatment. Whether you feel side effects will depend on the type of therapy and how your immune system responds. Everyone's experience is unique.



What can I do to play an active role in treatment?

Prepare for appointments

Stay informed. Don't be afraid to ask a lot of questions. Write them down as they come to you and bring them to your appointments. Record your progress and any side effects daily. Sometimes the amount of information you receive at each appointment can be overwhelming. Consider asking your doctor if you can record your visits so you can listen to the conversation again later.

Bring support

A friend or family member can act as a second set of ears and eyes at an appointment. They may also have their own questions for your healthcare team.

Be organized

Be sure to attend all appointments. Call ahead to confirm the appointments, and find out what you need to bring (like a list of all of your medications). Use the checklist below to prepare for your next visit.

Appointment checklist

- Mark the date and time on a calendar.
- Make any necessary arrangements for traveling to and from your appointment.
- Write down any questions you have in advance.
- Bring a pen and notepad.

Stay in touch

Remember, you are not alone in your fight against cancer. As you learn more about your treatment, try to anticipate your tasks and think about who can help you. For example, someone could help you plan in advance for getting to and from the clinic.

Engage your community

Allow others to take part in your journey and learn from their experiences and insights. Talking with cancer survivors, support groups and your healthcare team will help you understand the problems you might encounter and how to overcome them.

Report your symptoms

For fear of being a nuisance, some patients are reluctant to report side effects to their healthcare team. Do not hesitate! Your team is there to help you, and they need to be fully informed to provide the best care possible. Tracking your side effects is key to monitoring your progress.

Important contact information

Nurse

Oncologist

Therapist

Support group

Is it normal to feel this way?

Living with cancer is an emotional time. The feelings you are having are normal responses to this life-changing experience.

Sometimes we can cope with these feelings on our own, but other times we need help from others. Remember that you're human too and not just a patient.



Reflect

Periodically, take a look at the questions below to help you dial in to how you are feeling. Feel free to make copies of this page.

In the past 7 days:

I felt worried...

Never.....Rarely.....Sometimes.....Often.....Always

I felt afraid...

Never.....Rarely.....Sometimes.....Often.....Always

I felt angry...

Never.....Rarely.....Sometimes.....Often.....Always

I felt helpless...

Never.....Rarely.....Sometimes.....Often.....Always

I felt guilty...

Never.....Rarely.....Sometimes.....Often.....Always

I felt anxious...

Never.....Rarely.....Sometimes.....Often.....Always

I felt in denial...

Never.....Rarely.....Sometimes.....Often.....Always

I felt _____

Never.....Rarely.....Sometimes.....Often.....Always

I felt sad...

Never.....Rarely.....Sometimes.....Often.....Always

I felt hopeful...

Never.....Rarely.....Sometimes.....Often.....Always

I felt optimistic...

Never.....Rarely.....Sometimes.....Often.....Always

I felt energetic...

Never.....Rarely.....Sometimes.....Often.....Always

I felt happy...

Never.....Rarely.....Sometimes.....Often.....Always

I felt empowered...

Never.....Rarely.....Sometimes.....Often.....Always

I felt grateful...

Never.....Rarely.....Sometimes.....Often.....Always

I felt _____

Never.....Rarely.....Sometimes.....Often.....Always



Consider sharing this page with your healthcare team to start a conversation. Discussing your feelings and concerns can help others understand how they can help you.

Identifying how you are feeling is the first step to taking care of yourself. The next page gives examples of how you can find support and manage your emotional well-being.

What can I do to cope?

Your emotional well-being is just as important as your physical health. There are many ways for you to take care of your emotional health, such as:

- Talking to your healthcare team
- Talking to friends and family
- Talking to a counselor
- Finding local or online support groups
- Finding time for yourself
- Setting aside quiet time
- Journaling
- Going for a walk
- Getting fresh air
- Meditating
- Exercising
- Resting

It is common for patients to seek support from other people. If there are aspects of your therapy that you are uncomfortable sharing with those closest to you, consider speaking with others in your community, such as:

- Other friends and family
- Your healthcare team
- Therapists
- Support groups
- Fellow patients
- A religious advisor

Reflect

Take a look at the questions below to see how you can expand your support network:

Do you talk to others about yourself or your situation?

Never.....Rarely.....Sometimes.....Often.....Always

Do you have someone to confide in or talk to about yourself or your situation?

Never.....Rarely.....Sometimes.....Often.....Always

Do you have someone who will listen to you when you need to talk?

Never.....Rarely.....Sometimes.....Often.....Always



Your healthcare team knows this is a difficult time for you. Feel free to approach them for additional help. They may be able to introduce you to other resources in your area.

Where can I get more information about immunotherapy?

Your healthcare team is excited to offer you this new option for treatment. For more information about cancer immunotherapy, ask your healthcare team or visit the following websites.



American Cancer Society www.cancer.org

CancerCare www.cancercare.org

Cancer Research Institute www.cancerresearch.org

Cancer Support Community www.cancersupportcommunity.org

ClinicalTrials.gov www.clinicaltrials.gov

International Myeloma Foundation www.myeloma.org

Leukemia and Lymphoma Society www.lls.org

Multiple Myeloma Opportunities for Research and Education www.mmore.org

Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation www.themmrf.org

Stand Up to Cancer www.standup2cancer.org

This list of resources is provided as a convenience. Bristol Myers Squibb does not endorse and is not responsible for information provided by third-party organizations.

 SEARCH TERMS

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