

IMMUNOTHERAPY AND CHEMOTHERAPY: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

What is immunotherapy?

Immunotherapy is a new class of cancer treatment that empowers your immune system to fight cancer, just like it fights infections like the flu.

How does immunotherapy work?

Some types of immunotherapy enable a stronger immune response, while others teach your immune system what cancer looks like so that your immune system can hunt down cancer cells.

How is immunotherapy different from chemotherapy?

Both chemotherapy and immunotherapy eliminate cancer cells, but while chemo targets tumors, immunotherapy targets the immune system and empowers your own body to destroy tumors.

WHAT THESE DIFFERENCES MEAN FOR YOU

	IMMUNOTHERAPY	CHEMOTHERAPY
HOW FAST IT WORKS	Immunotherapy may eliminate tumors quickly, but because it works through the immune system, tumors can sometimes take months to disappear. Tumors may even appear to grow larger before shrinking again.	Since chemo attacks cancer cells directly, tumors can shrink immediately.
HOW LONG IT WORKS	Immunotherapy can act on the tumor after treatment ends, because your immune system can remember what cancer looks like and provide long-term protection.	Chemotherapy can act on tumors for as long as the drugs are in the body.
SIDE EFFECTS	With immunotherapy, side effects can come from an overactive immune system, and can include things like skin rashes or diarrhea.	Chemo attacks all rapidly dividing cells, whether healthy or cancerous, which is why it can cause side effects like hair loss or nausea.

These are just some of the side effects of immunotherapy and chemo treatments. Every patient is unique and with both immunotherapy and chemo, it's important to share anything new you experience with your medical team.

There's more to learn about immunotherapy at [CancerResearch.org/Treatments](https://www.cancerresearch.org/treatments).