Common Side Effects

- Fatigue
- Neuropathy
- Hot flashes
Fatigue

• According to the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (2017), cancer related fatigue is defined as “a distressing, persistent, subjective sense of physical, emotional, and/or cognitive tiredness or exhaustion related to cancer or cancer treatment that is not proportional to recent activity and interferes with usual functioning.”
Fatigue

• Common for up to a year after treatment with surgery, radiation, and/or chemotherapy
• If this presents more than a few months after completion of treatment, please see your primary care provider for a full work-up
• Contributing factors include:
  – Heart, lung, kidney, or endocrine disease
  – Anemia
  – Pain
  – Medications
  – Emotional distress
  – Sleep disturbance
  – Inadequate nutrition
Fatigue

- Physical activity is the gold standard for treatment of cancer related fatigue
- NCCN recommendations for physical activity for cancer survivors:
  - 150 minutes of moderate intensity aerobic exercise OR 75 minutes of vigorous intensity aerobic exercise weekly
  - Strength training 2-3 times weekly
  - Stretching twice weekly
  - Be physically active daily and avoid prolonged sitting
  - Exercise programs may need to be tailored- let your team know if you would like to see physical therapy!
- Allow yourself periods of rest between active times
- Select activities that bring you joy if you have to choose between two options
- Delegate tasks to others as needed
- If your fatigue is caused by a treatable issue, please seek out care for this with your primary care provider
Neuropathy

• Certain chemotherapies, include taxanes (Taxol, Taxotere) and platins (cisplatin, carboplatin) can affect sensory and motor nerve function leading to numbness, tingling, pain, and weakness.

• This typically presents in a symmetric “stocking/glove” distribution during treatment but can present afterward as well.

• May initially worsen a few months after treatment but should improve over time, though may not completely resolve.
Neuropathy

• Research has failed to demonstrate efficacy for prevention of neuropathy but ongoing research is promising
  – B vitamins
    • May potentially reduce severity of neuropathy by protecting nerve endings
    • Dana Farber Institute recommends vitamin B6 50-200mg per day, but no more than 200mg daily as this could worsen symptoms as well as vitamin B12 1000mcg daily
  – Exercise
    • Preliminary data suggests that exercise may be helpful in preventing neuropathy but further studies are needed
    • Low impact exercise such as biking and swimming
  – Cryotherapy
    • An ongoing study suggest that wearing frozen gloves during weekly paclitaxel (Taxol) infusions may help prevent neuropathy but more information is needed
Neuropathy

- Results are mixed for **treatment** of neuropathy
  - Medications
    - Antidepressants (duloxetine) and anticonvulsants (gabapentin, pregabalin) are the first line treatment for neuropathic pain
    - Duloxetine is the only medication shown in research to be effective
    - Research does not demonstrate efficacy of gabapentin or pregabalin in chemotherapy induced neuropathy
    - ASCO guidelines suggest that gabapentin and pregabalin may be tried due to lack of many other options and the fact that these drugs are helpful for treatment of other forms of neuropathy
  - Glutamic acid
    - Results are mixed on the use of glutamic acid for neuropathy and more research is needed
    - We recommend L-glutamine 2000mg twice daily if you develop neuropathy during chemotherapy
  - Topical menthol
    - Calamine lotion with 0.5% menthol twice daily has shown to be helpful, further studies are underway
  - Non-pharmacologic treatments may be offered if medications are ineffective or not desired
    - Physical therapy
    - Acupuncture
    - TENS unit
    - SCRAMBLER therapy
    - Laser therapy
Ashley’s Neuropathy Instructions

• Signs and symptoms of neuropathy include numbness, tingling, burning, or heaviness of the extremities, typically in a "stocking/glove" distribution of the feet and arms. It is important to take care of extremities by doing such things as wearing gloves or boots in cold weather and protecting skin from extreme temperatures, adjusting hot water heater to 105-120 degrees, checking hands and feet daily for skin breakdown, and wearing hard soled protective shoes. Alcohol may worsen symptoms of neuropathy and should be avoided. Neuropathy puts patients at risks for falls. Floor rugs may cause trips and falls and should be avoided. Night lights may help prevent falls at night. Vitamin B6 50mg twice daily and L-glutamine 2000mg twice daily may help decrease neuropathy symptoms during active chemotherapy treatment. Call clinic if you have worsening numbness, tingling, pain, or functional ability as treatment may need to be adjusted.
Hot Flashes

• Many women experience hot flashes due to menopause and a loss of estrogen
  – Surgical menopause
  – Ovarian failure due to chemotherapy or radiation
  – Often more severe and abrupt than typical menopause

• One study showed that the average duration of hot flashes was 4.9 years in women going through menopause
Hot Flashes

• Treatment options
  – Know and avoid triggers, such as caffeine and spicy foods
  – Dress in layers
  – Fans may be helpful, especially at the bedside
  – Vitamin E
  – Weight loss
  – Cognitive behavioral therapy
  – Hypnosis
  – Medications
    • antidepressants such as paroxetine (Paxil) and venlafaxine (Effexor), anticonvulsants such as gabapentin (Neurontin)
  – Many herbal and plant based therapies have not been shown to be effective
Thank you for coming today! It is an honor to be able to care for you.
Management of Dryness and Discomfort after Menopause (Natural or Surgical)

1. Dryness/Discomfort
   a. Vaginal dryness
      i. Good Clean Love restore vaginal moisturizer ($15 Amazon)
      ii. Hyalogyn ($25 for 30 day supply)
      iii. Replens vaginal moisturizer ($11-12 Amazon)
   b. Surgical menopause
      i. Lubricants
         1. Water based
            a. Most can be used with latex (condoms); can be used with silicone toys
            b. Astroglide lubricating gel 4 oz.; may cause discomfort. ($6.50 Walgreen’s; $14 Amazon for 3 pack of 4 oz.; $4 Walmart)
            c. KY Ultragel personal lubricant ($15 Walgreens or Amazon; $11 Walmart)
            d. Good clean love Naked ($23 Amazon for 4 oz. x2; $12 Walgreens for 4 oz. only)
   2. Silicone
      a. Hypoallergenic so good for allergies or sensitive skin. Latex safe. Last much longer than water based. Should not use with silicone toys as can break down over time
         b. Wet platinum 9 oz. ($23 Amazon; $25 Walmart; $22 Walgreens)
         c. Uber lube ($18 Amazon for 50 ml)
         d. Pink ($19 Amazon or $26 Walgreens for 4 oz.)
   3. Water and Silicone
      a. Sliquid Silk ($16 Amazon)
   4. Avoid products with glycerin
      ii. Foreplay
      iii. Position changes for comfort