



## **FERTILITY AND CANCER: DURING TREATMENT**

### ***Common Concerns DURING Breast Cancer Treatment***

During treatment you may have side effects such as hair loss, tiredness, sleeplessness, appetite changes, weight gain, nausea and vomiting, and bone marrow depression. These are normal and expected side effects that can be well controlled with medication and other support.

During treatment, you may also worry about how chemotherapy will change your ability to get pregnant or have early menopausal (the change of life) symptoms. Here are a few things to keep in mind:

- The effect on your ovaries depends on the type and number of chemotherapy treatment cycles and how old you are. The larger the cyclophosphamide dose and the older you are, the less likely it will be that you'll be able to get pregnant once you are done with treatment.
- Some women don't stop having periods during chemotherapy. Others stop having periods within the first two or three cycles. Others stop shortly after treatment ends.
- Each cycle of chemotherapy has an effect on your ovaries and the effect is bigger over time as you get more doses.
- Symptoms of menopause include hot flashes, sleeplessness, changes in going to the bathroom, bone loss, and heart disease. If you have any of these problems, please make sure to let your doctor or health care team know.
- Ask to see a reproductive endocrinologist (a fertility specialist). It is not too late. A reproductive endocrinologist (fertility specialist) can work with your oncology team to provide you with important information about your different options.

### ***Fertility-Sparing Options DURING Treatment***

During treatment and after treatment, there are fewer ways to keep your ability to get pregnant. This is because the chemotherapy may have already damaged your ovaries. This section discusses fertility-sparing options and concerns that women may have during treatment. There are some medications that may stop



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you from ovulating during treatment so that your ovaries may be protected. These are experimental, but talk to your doctor about your options.

### Useful websites:

- <http://images.livestrong.org/pdfs/livestrong-fertility/LIVESTRONG-Fertility-Brochure.pdf>
- [http://images.livestrong.org/pdfs/livestrong-fertility/LF\\_PreservationOptionsChart\\_Women.pdf](http://images.livestrong.org/pdfs/livestrong-fertility/LF_PreservationOptionsChart_Women.pdf)
- <https://www.uabmedicine.org/-/options-for-fertility-preservation?inheritRedirect=true>
- [http://www.breastcancer.org/tips/fert\\_preg\\_adopt?gclid=CifjgYq5rLYCFQvnnAodgWEAWA](http://www.breastcancer.org/tips/fert_preg_adopt?gclid=CifjgYq5rLYCFQvnnAodgWEAWA)