

You are getting oxaliplatin, a medicine to treat your cancer. It has an unusual side effect that does not happen with other cancer medicines. This factsheet tells you about it and gives tips to help you with it.

Sensitivity to Cold

Touching cold things can make your hands and feet feel tingly, numb, or stiff.

Having cold food or drinks, or breathing cold air can make you feel you are not breathing right—even though you are. You may feel these things:

- Tightness in your throat or jaw
- Hard time swallowing
- Odd feelings in your tongue
- Hard time breathing or feeling you cannot catch your breath
- Pressure in your chest

This may seem scary, but it is not dangerous. If these feelings happen, try these things to help:

- Warm the air you are breathing by holding your cupped hands over your nose and mouth.
- Drink a warm beverage.

Cold sensitivity can happen during your infusion and for 5–7 days afterward. The sensations usually last for only a few moments. As you get more oxaliplatin treatments, the sensitivity to cold may happen more often and last longer.

Tips to Help Avoid Cold Sensitivity

Here are some things you can do to help avoid cold sensitivity.

Avoid cold foods and drinks.

- Have your food and drinks at room temperature or warmer.
- Do not put ice in drinks.
- Do not eat ice cream or other frozen desserts.

Avoid cold air.

- If you go outside when the temperature is below 50°F, wear warm clothing. This includes socks, shoes, and gloves. Cover your mouth and nose with a scarf to help warm the air you breathe.
- If your hands or feet get cold, rinse them with warm water as soon as you are back indoors.
- Do not inhale deeply when the air is cold. This includes activities such as opening the freezer, as well as when outdoors.
- Do not let the air conditioner blow directly on your skin, for example, when in the car. Wearing long sleeves and pants can help.

Avoid touching cold things.

- Use potholders or oven mitts to take items from the refrigerator or freezer.
- Do not use ice packs on any part of your body.
- Keep all parts of your body out of cold water.

When to Talk with Your Doctor

Talk with your doctor at your next appointment if these things happen:

- You have cold sensitivity for more than 7 days after your infusion.
- Cold sensitivity keeps you from doing your daily activities.