

Oral Chemotherapy: Improving Quality of Life and Treatment Adherence

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DESCRIPTION

Oral chemotherapy has developed cancer treatment, providing patients with a more convenient and often less intrusive alternative to traditional intravenous therapies. This method allows patients to take cancer-fighting medications in pill or capsule form, making it easier to manage treatment schedules and integrate medication into their daily lives. While oral chemotherapy offers the advantage of flexibility and convenience, it also requires patients to be more proactive in managing their treatment. Unlike intravenous therapies, which are administered under the supervision of healthcare professionals, oral chemotherapy depends on patients' adherence to prescribed dosages and schedules. This can sometimes lead to missed doses or incorrect use, which may impact the effectiveness of the treatment. As with any medical advancement however, oral chemotherapy comes with its own set of benefits and challenges that warrant careful consideration.

Benefits of oral chemotherapy

One of the most significant advantages of oral chemotherapy is the convenience it offers. Patients can take their medication at home, reducing the need for frequent trips to treatment centers. This not only saves time and travel expenses but also helps minimize the emotional burden associated with receiving treatment in a clinical setting. For many patients, the ability to manage their treatment at home can enhance their quality of life, allowing them to maintain a sense of normalcy during a challenging time.

Moreover, oral chemotherapy can lead to better adherence to treatment plans. Traditional chemotherapy often requires patients to endure lengthy infusions, which can be physically taxing and lead to missed appointments. In contrast, with oral medications, patients have more flexibility to incorporate treatment into their routines. This increased adherence can contribute to better outcomes as consistent medication intake is essential for the efficacy of cancer therapies.

Challenges and considerations

Despite its advantages, oral chemotherapy is not without challenges. One of the most pressing concerns is the potential for medication errors. Patients are responsible for taking their medications as prescribed, which can lead to misunderstandings about dosages or timing. This self-management requires a level of health literacy that not all patients possess, potentially jeopardizing treatment efficacy. Healthcare providers must ensure that patients are well-educated about their medications and aware of the importance of following their prescribed regimens.

Another issue is the side effects associated with oral chemotherapy, which can vary widely among patients. While some may experience manageable side effects, others may face more severe reactions that could impact their quality of life. Unlike intravenous treatments, where healthcare professionals can monitor patients closely during infusions, oral chemotherapy requires patients to self-monitor for side effects, making it essential for them to maintain open lines of communication with their healthcare teams.

Additionally, the cost of oral chemotherapy can be a significant barrier. Many patients may face high out-of-pocket expenses for oral medications, which can lead to difficult financial decisions about their treatment. The disparity in access to these medications underscores the need for support and rules that address the affordability of cancer treatments.

CONCLUSION

As the background of cancer treatment continues to evolve, oral chemotherapy represents a significant advancement that offers both promise and challenges. By allowing patients to take their medications at home, it reduces the need for frequent hospital visits and can improve overall quality of life during treatment. However, this form of therapy also requires careful attention to ensure proper maintenance to the prescribed treatment and management of side effects. While not suitable for every patient

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or every type of cancer, oral chemotherapy continues to offer valuable benefits, particularly for those with cancers that respond well to oral drugs. To maximize the benefits, healthcare providers must focus on patient education and support, ensuring

that individuals are equipped to manage their treatment effectively. Improved communication between patients and healthcare teams is essential for addressing side effects and maintaining adherence.