



the Physicians of Oncology Hematology West

Managing a Low Red Blood Cell Count (Anemia)

Because your chemotherapy treatment can lower the number of red blood cells in your body, you may experience anemia, a condition where your body has fewer red blood cells than normal.

Anemia can occur as a result of your disease or as a result of the chemotherapy or radiation therapy used to treat your disease.

Keeping your red blood cell levels within normal limits is important because they contain hemoglobin, a protein that carries oxygen from your lungs to the rest of your body. Without enough hemoglobin in your body, your organs will not get the oxygen they need to function properly.

It is important that you recognize the symptoms of anemia so you can receive appropriate and timely treatment. In many cases, symptoms may be mild. Talk to your healthcare provider if you are experiencing any of the following:

- Shortness of breath
- Chest pains
- Dizziness or fainting
- Rapid heartbeat (tachycardia)
- Fatigue
- Pale skin, including decreased pinkness of the lips, gums, lining of the eyelids, nail beds, and palms
- Swelling in your hands or feet

To treat your anemia, your doctor may recommend lifestyle changes such as getting rest, limiting activities, and eating a well-balanced diet.

You may also need to receive a blood transfusion. Your physician may order medications such as iron supplements or Aranesp / Procrit injections to help your body make more red blood cells. Ask your doctor if other treatment options may also be available for you.

For more information feel free to visit the website chemocare.com