

Chemotherapy and the Gerson Therapy

The following questions will address common questions the Gerson Institute receives about chemotherapy and the Gerson Therapy.

Q: Can a patient begin the Gerson Therapy while simultaneously undergoing chemotherapy?

A: In general, it is not recommended to do this without medical supervision.

If a patient is not planning to attend a Gerson clinic, but is planning to undergo chemotherapy and is interested in following a modified Gerson regime for nutritional support, we suggest working with someone in the alternative medical field who can assess their case and make appropriate adjustments according to the patient's unique needs. This could be an integrative MD or a naturopath.

In some cases, the Gerson Therapy may not be a suitable option for a patient undergoing chemotherapy, and the doctor may have alternative recommendations for therapies or protocols that may be better suited to their individual patient's needs during their chemo treatment.

Below, we've listed a few resources for finding a doctor well-versed in alternative medicine:

- Naturopaths trained in oncological support during chemotherapy: www.oncanp.org
 - Integrative doctors: www.wellness.com/find/integrative%20doctor
 - Integrative holistic physicians: www.abihm.org/search-doctors
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Q: Can a patient begin the Gerson Therapy *after* completing their chemotherapy treatment?

A: We recommend that anyone considering doing the Gerson Therapy after having previously undergone chemotherapy do so under the supervision of a qualified practitioner, either at a licensed Gerson clinic or with a practitioner in private practice.

The Gerson clinic in Mexico has specific policies regarding patients who have previously undergone chemotherapy: if a patient is applying to the Gerson clinic in Mexico, all cycles of chemotherapy need to be completed before starting the Gerson Therapy. **Patients must wait four weeks after completing chemotherapy before submitting an application to the clinic, including recent blood work.** This span of time will allow for a more accurate assessment of the patient's status post-chemotherapy. This is also required for someone who does not complete all the cycles of chemotherapy and stops prematurely.

The doctors at each of the clinics have their own suggestions and guidelines for patients to prepare for the therapy before they arrive at the clinic for treatment, which they will provide to patients who have been accepted for treatment.

If the patient is accepted to the clinic, they will be started on a modified version of the therapy in order to prevent strong detoxification reactions to the residual chemotherapy.

If a patient is not planning to attend a Gerson clinic but is considering undertaking the Gerson Therapy after chemotherapy, we advise them to enlist the services of a certified Gerson practitioner who can assess their case and make the appropriate recommendations according to the patient's unique needs. **Each person and situation is different and therefore we cannot give a general directive on this.**

Q: Are there any parts of the Gerson Therapy that a patient can start during or after chemotherapy?

A: We do not have a generalized protocol for this, as it must be determined on an individual basis.

If a patient is not yet working with a Gerson doctor and is waiting to begin the Gerson Therapy during or after completing chemotherapy, they can use this time to begin adopting a healthier lifestyle. Positive actions one can take to support overall health and prepare for the Gerson Therapy include:

- Eating a healthy, organic and predominantly plant-based diet
 - Eliminating salt from the diet
 - Staying well-hydrated by drinking plenty of fluids
 - Drinking a few (1-3) juices per day
 - Removing potential sources of toxins from the home
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Q: Is chemotherapy ever recommended for patients who are already following the Gerson Therapy?

A: Yes, in some individual cases. There are certain circumstances under which chemotherapy, radiation or another type of medical intervention may be medically necessary.

If a conventional treatment is recommended by a Gerson practitioner, they will be able to assist the patient in developing an individualized treatment plan that encompasses the patient's needs before, during and after receiving chemotherapy. This will require modifications to the patient's protocol. In some cases, the patient may be able to stay on a reduced Gerson therapy protocol while receiving the chemotherapy. In general, we have seen that patients who start chemotherapy after having been on the Gerson Therapy for some time tolerate the chemo treatment much better, since they are more well-nourished and detoxified.

We cannot provide generalized guidance here on how, when or under what circumstances chemotherapy and the Gerson Therapy could be combined; this is a complex situation, and *always*



needs to be taken on a case-by-case basis according to the individual patient's needs, under the supervision of a qualified medical professional.

Q: Why are conventional treatments like chemotherapy sometimes necessary?

A: The Gerson Therapy is nutritionally-based, and it works slowly over time; patients stay on the Gerson Therapy for a minimum of two years, but sometimes as long as five. In some cases, we see that it can take over a year for a patient to begin showing signs of improvement. However, not every patient has that much time.

For patients whose cancers are very aggressive, and who are not responding to the Gerson Therapy as quickly as they need, chemotherapy may be recommended as a necessary adjunct to quickly shrink the tumors and slow the progression of the disease. This may also be true in cases where the tumor constricts the patient's ability to eat and prevents the patient from consuming the necessary foods on the Gerson protocol, or in cases where tumor pressure on adjacent organs or tissues becomes life-threatening. After completing chemotherapy, the patient should consult with their Gerson practitioner to determine how, when, or if to resume a modified Gerson protocol.