



## What is chemo brain?

A decrease in mental “sharpness” during or after cancer treatment.

AFTER treatment report symptoms of cognitive impairment such as:

- Difficulty concentrating or focusing
- Memory lapses or forgetfulness
- Difficulty multi-tasking, or remembering details.
- Disorganized, slower processing, taking longer to finish tasks

Changes are subtle and family members may not notice. Older adults are more susceptible to symptoms.

Causes are not fully understood but may be a combination of treatment side effects and the cancer itself.

Other factors may worsen symptoms such as:

- Sleep disturbance/Fatigue
- Depression
- Stress/Worry
- Nutritional deficiencies
- Certain medications

## Coping with chemo brain

How long it lasts, and impact on daily life varies widely.

Regular physical activity is important for overall health and maintaining a healthy brain.

- Hendricks Regional Health survivors are eligible for **LIVESTRONG at the YMCA**, a free 12-week program that emphasizes health and wellness.

Sleep deprivation has been linked to memory problems.

- Sleep problems after cancer treatment are common, and the **Hendricks Regional Health Sleep Disorders Center** can help.

Eat a nutritious diet high in plant-based food and low in processed meat and alcohol.

- Talk with a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist, board-certified in oncology for more information.

Exercise your brain – learn a new skill or do word puzzles.

Establish a routine, and keep a detailed daily planner.

Don't multi-task – avoid distractions when possible.

Significant symptoms require further testing and neuropsychology referral for rehabilitation strategies.

ASK FOR HELP – Call your doctor.

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Ask your medical team for a referral for **LIVESTRONG at the YMCA**.

Call **(317) 745-3769** for an appointment with a Registered Dietitian, board-certified in oncology.

Call **(317) 745-3680** for appointment with **Hendricks Regional Health Sleep Disorders Center** if you are experiencing sleep problems.

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