

## Cryotherapy and Taxane Medicines

### About Cryotherapy

Cryotherapy is when you expose an area of the body to cold. This cooling effect decreases blood flow to the area.

### Uses of Cryotherapy

- **Prevent hair loss:** Some people use cryotherapy to prevent hair loss. This is done by applying cold to the scalp. This is called scalp cooling or cold caps. There is good evidence that this works to prevent hair loss or reduce hair thinning during some chemotherapy regimens.
- **Prevent nerve problems:** Taxane medicines have a side effect of nerve problems in the hands and feet. This is called peripheral neuropathy. Studies have been done in people getting taxane medicines to see if cryotherapy can prevent these nerve problems. These studies did not show a clear benefit. Given this, cryotherapy is not supported as a way to prevent neuropathy for people taking taxanes.

### Preventing Nerve Problems When Taking Taxane Medicines

There is not an effective way to prevent this side effect. Cryotherapy on your hands and feet is not recommended.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright ©7/2020. University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#8157.