

10 Things to Elevate **Your** Chemo Journey

Science-backed strategies to support your treatment with strength, clarity, and hope





Welcome

Hello and thank you for requesting our guide:
***10 Things To Elevate Your
Chemotherapy Journey.***

Facing chemotherapy often means navigating overwhelming and conflicting information. This guide was created to bring clarity and reassurance, with clear, practical ways to actively strengthen your treatment. Everything here is based on science and explained with compassion, so you can move forward with more confidence and hope.

My name is Dr. Jay Chaplin and I possess a unique blend of broad scientific expertise, extensive practical experience, and deep-seated compassion, particularly in the complex field of cancer treatment. My journey, marked by an insatiable curiosity for science and a commitment to alleviating human suffering, has equipped me with an unusually comprehensive understanding of disease mechanisms and treatment strategies. Basically, I am first rate science nerd.

Thank you for allowing me to help you sort through the noise. My commitment is to bring you the most meaningful and trustworthy insights available, so you can focus on what matters most: your healing and your life.

“ The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don’t have any.”
— *Alice Walker*

Why You Can Trust This Guide

Behind this work is Jay Chaplin, PhD, who brings over three decades of research, innovation, and direct client support to the field of cancer treatment. Unlike medical influencers who often begin with a belief and seek only confirming evidence, Jay's perspective is grounded in designing real treatments and testing them against the hardest realities of science.

Compassion in action: From caring for AIDS patients in the 1980s to supporting close friends in their cancer journeys, Dr. Chaplin has combined cutting-edge science with deep empathy. His work is driven by one principle: everyone deserves clarity, dignity, and the best chance possible.

Credentials:

- 30+ years in drug design and immunology
- Undergrad degree in Biochemistry & Molecular Biology
- Master's in Chemistry & Biochemistry
- Ph.D. in Molecular & Cellular Biology (focus: immune system regulation and reprogramming)
- Trained at the University of Washington during pioneering work in CAR T-cell therapy

Experience:

- Developed and tested numerous vaccine and drug treatments for cancer and autoimmune diseases
- Deep expertise in chemotherapy, immunotherapy, drug safety, and metabolism
- Supported friends and clients with cancers such as prostate, breast, melanoma, colorectal, and more—helping them extend survival and improve quality of life



10 Ways to Elevate Your Chemotherapy

1) Survival Odds Are Better Than They Sound

The survival statistics you see today are already years out of date. They reflect treatments used 5–10 years ago, not the new therapies available now. For example, pancreatic cancer survival nearly doubled in the past decade, and lung cancer survival rates have risen significantly with new targeted therapies. The numbers you're quoted are not the reality you face—**your odds are better.**

2) Stress Directly Impacts Treatment

Stress hormones can make tumors harder to treat and reduce the effectiveness of chemotherapy. Even small steps matter—practicing Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), journaling, or learning simple breathing techniques can help reduce stress hormones in your body and improve outcomes. **Think of stress reduction as part of your treatment plan, not an optional extra.**

3) Every Tumor Is Unique

Not all cancer cells in a tumor behave the same way. That's why doctors often use multiple chemotherapy drugs together, and why any stage of cancer can benefit from chemo. **Ask about biomarker testing**—knowing which markers your cancer expresses can open the door to targeted therapies that are more effective and often have fewer side effects.



4) The First Round Matters Most

The first doses of chemotherapy are often the most important. Cancer cells that survive early treatment can adapt and become harder to kill later. This is why oncologists typically start with strong, multi-drug regimens designed to hit cancer hard the first time. The message: **early intensity can save you from bigger challenges down the road.**

5) Diet Myths Can Be Dangerous

You may have heard “sugar feeds cancer.” It’s more complicated than that. Many cancers rely more on sugar, while others thrive on fat. Cutting out sugar entirely without medical guidance may sometimes backfire, making cancer cells more aggressive and more likely to spread. **Nutrition choices should be personalized**—always ask your care team before starting a restrictive diet.

6) Not All Supplements Help

Vitamins and “natural” remedies aren’t automatically safe with chemo. Some supplements, like antioxidants, St. John’s Wort, or even Vitamin B12, can interfere with drugs and protect cancer cells instead of fighting them. Many common vitamins also worsen side effects like nausea and fatigue. Before taking anything new, share your full supplement list with your doctor or pharmacist. It can make the difference between treatment success and failure.

7) Everyday Foods Can Interfere

It’s not just supplements—common foods like grapefruit, lime, star fruit, cabbage, garlic, or onions can change how your body processes chemotherapy. This can cause drugs to build up to toxic levels or get cleared too quickly to work. **Always check for food-drug interactions once you know your specific regimen.**



8) Timing Matters

When you receive chemotherapy can affect how well it works. Many drugs are most effective in the morning, while others—like those targeting brain cancers—work better in the evening when the blood-brain barrier is more permeable. **Ask your treatment team if timing adjustments could make your therapy more effective.**

9) Protect Your Sleep

Sleep isn't just about rest—it's the part of your treatment when your immune system recharges. Chemotherapy itself can disrupt sleep, but **improving sleep quality boosts your body's ability to fight cancer.** Basic habits help (consistent bedtime, less screen time before bed), and supplements like Theanine or Melatonin may support deeper rest. Discuss safe options with your care team.

10) Exercise Improves Outcomes

Exercise reduces fatigue and lowers the risk of cancer recurrence—but intensity matters. Walking is good, but studies show moderate aerobic activity (like brisk walking, light cycling, or swimming for 20 minutes, 3 or more times per week) gives the biggest benefit. You should feel slightly out of breath but not exhausted. **Movement is medicine; exercise during chemotherapy has been shown to both reduce overall fatigue and increase treatment efficacy.**

Appendix (Extended Details)

For those who want to explore a deeper level of the science behind these 10 strategies - including technical notes - see the extended version beginning on page 10.



Walking This Path Together

These 10 strategies are a starting point—practical steps that can help you feel stronger, clearer, and more supported as you move through treatment. But the real goal isn't just getting through chemo—it's helping you thrive during and after treatment, staying connected to the life you love: walking in nature, laughing with family, or simply feeling at peace in your own body.

We want you to feel seen and supported. Our hope is that this guide has given you not only useful information, but also a sense of clarity and encouragement.



If you'd like to go further, we invite you to stay connected with us. Now that you've signed up for our email list, you'll receive ongoing resources, new videos, and more ways to help you elevate your treatment. Please also subscribe to our [YouTube channel](#) and visit our [website](#) for additional support.

You don't have to walk this road alone—we're here to walk it with you, with science, compassion, and hope.

With clarity and hope,
Dr. Jay W. Chaplin, PhD

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jay Chaplin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Begin Your Journey Today

We're here to support you — every step of the way.

Working With Dr. Chaplin: A Partner on Your Journey

When you work with Dr. Chaplin, you're not just receiving information—you're gaining a trusted partner who helps you make sense of a complex and often overwhelming process. With 30+ years of experience in drug development and cancer research, Dr. Chaplin translates the science into clear, practical steps you can use right away. Here's what you can expect:

- **Clarity:** Understand your treatment plan in plain language.
- **Safety:** Spot potential interactions between drugs, foods, or supplements.
- **Supportive Habits:** Learn simple, evidence-based practices that maximize treatment success and minimize discomfort.
- **Guidance:** Receive tools and insights that help you feel more confident in daily choices.

What sets Dr. Chaplin apart is his balance of deep technical expertise and human compassion. He doesn't replace your medical team; instead, he walks alongside you, empowering you to ask better questions, make informed choices, and feel more confident through every stage of treatment.

Ways to Book an Appointment



Contact Us For A Consultation

[Click here to contact us](#)



Phone Consultation

(267) 777-7643



Email Support

info@elevatingcancertreatment.com



Website

www.elevatingcancertreatment.com

Where to Start: Your Quick-Start Guide to Elevating Your Treatment

Step 1: Connect with Community

Healing is easier when you're not alone. Join support groups, both local and online, where patients and families share experiences. You are also now on our email list and you will be receiving more science based content to assist you on your journey.

Step 2: Learn About Your Specific Treatment

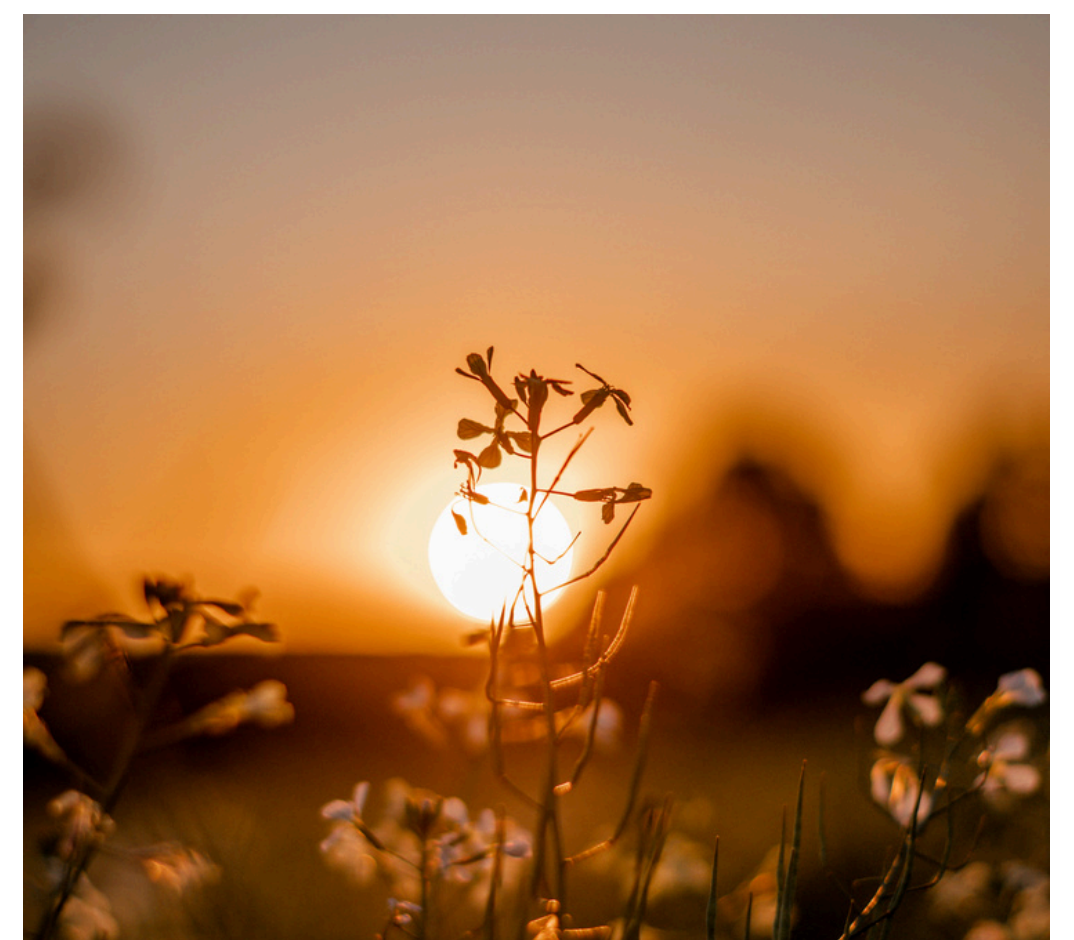
Every cancer and every regimen is different. Ask your doctor about your exact treatment plan and bring a full list of supplements or medications you're taking—so you can avoid dangerous interactions.

Step 3: Educate Yourself with Reliable Sources

Not all information online is trustworthy. Focus on resources grounded in science. Our YouTube channel is designed to make complex information clear and useful—[click here to check it out](#).

Step 4: Create Your Personal Support Plan

Once you know your treatment path, map out the basics: sleep, stress reduction, movement, and nutrition. Even small, consistent actions make a difference. Consider [reaching out for a consultation](#) with us for tailored guidance.



Appendix (Extended Details)

If you'd like to dive deeper, this section is for you. It's written for those who want to explore the science in depth, or for caregivers and professionals who need the details.

1) Understand that studies of survival rates and side effects are always out of date. The five-year survival data that just came out are from over five years ago, and our approaches get better constantly – so your odds are always better than what's being quoted. For instance, the five-year survival rate for lung cancer has increased 26% in the past five years – which means that if the study was published in 2025, that improvement is probably between 2014 (previous five year data) to 2019 (the “current” five year data). That's five for the “current” study and a year to compile data, confirm numbers, and publish the “new” results (so starting six years ago), and comparing it to a window five years BEFORE THAT (6+5=11 total years before now) for the comparison number. Even some of the most difficult cancers have become more treatable – in the past decade the survival rate from pancreatic cancer nearly doubled, from 7% to 13%. The addition of newly approved targeted therapies and immunotherapies are also significantly improving treatments, but the most recent long-term data hasn't been finalized for incorporation into survival rates. Stay positive, it will help with #2...

2) Stress promotes cancer growth and interferes with chemotherapy. Stress hormones like glucocorticoids and catecholamines block tumor killing by both direct and indirect paths. How you feel impacts how effective your treatment is, but how do you reduce stress in a stressful time? If you have access to Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) there is solid evidence that regular therapy increases treatment efficacy and decreases recurrence. In general, anything you can do to decrease stress is beneficial, even small things like consciously releasing decisions you don't need to make or scheduling them for a future time. Similarly, techniques like certain forms of meditation, pivoting, or focus wheels (which are tools for emotional regulation) can decrease stress and improve chemotherapy outcomes.

3) Cells throughout a tumor are often different and will respond to chemotherapy treatment differently. This is why multiple drugs are given together and why chemotherapy is often given for early and/or lower grade cancers. Contrary to assumptions, chemotherapy is useful and beneficial at all stages of cancer and is well suited for preventing recurrence – something that surgery or radiation alone can't provide. If biomarkers are available the percent of tumor cells expressing them is important to know as it can guide targeted therapies which are often more effective and better tolerated than general chemotherapy. These factors lead us to #4...

4) The first round of chemotherapy is crucial; cancer cells that survive can adapt to treatment and become harder to eliminate in the future. This is why broad chemotherapy regimens with multiple drugs are often given early, as the goal is to cure the disease instead of getting rid of most of it then allowing it time to re-grow and adapt. Stack the deck in your favor from the very beginning and make sure that your chemotherapy is as effective as possible even from the first dose.

5) You may have heard that tumors prefer sugar, and that you can “starve them away” with low sugar diets.... Studies have shown that blood sugar restriction can temporarily slow growth of many tumors, but they can also become more aggressive and likely to spread – the overall effect in some cases is worse, not better, treatment. In addition, many cancers are “fat-adapted” from the beginning and won't even be temporarily slowed by sugar restriction. The decision to go on a sugar restriction diet during chemotherapy is usually beneficial but requires a significant discussion of risks and benefits tailored to your specific cancer and situation – please do not assume it is always helpful, that's a myth.

6) Many common foods and supplements (even ones often recommended as “anti-cancer”) can block your chemotherapy and protect the cancer. Some are specific to a type of drug (e.g. enriched breads and fermented foods for one class of drugs, milk for a different drug, and sesame seeds for a third drug) and some are problems with most or all of the drugs (antioxidant supplements, St. John’s Wort, Vitamin B12, etc.). It is easy to assume that vitamins and “natural” supplements are always beneficial, but that isn’t true. Many can either prevent your chemotherapy from working or needlessly increase side effects. Once you have a detailed chemotherapy regimen from your doctor, please go over each drug and ask about detailed food and supplement interferences so you can get the best results from your treatment.

7) Chemotherapy drugs have a narrow window of dose to work in, as it is hard to poison the cancer without hurting you. Some foods can block or increase your body’s ability to eliminate these drugs – making the amount in your system either much higher (worse side effects) or much lower (less efficacy against the cancer) than expected. You will probably hear about grapefruit, but limes, star fruit, cabbage, onion, garlic, and many others all belong on that same list along with St. John’s Wort. Some supplements (Coenzyme Q-10) can lead to buildup of chemotherapy drugs in the lining of the intestine and increase nausea and diarrhea. Again, once you have a specific chemotherapy regimen, please go over the potential interferences with your doctor in detail.

8) The time of day that you take a particular chemotherapy or immunotherapy drug can significantly change how effective it is. Many treatments (especially platin drugs and 5FU, or checkpoint inhibitors) are best given in the morning (to target cells when they are at their most active) while some are best given in the evening (e.g. for brain cancers, as the Blood-Brain Barrier loosens up at night and allows more of the drug into the brain). The evidence for this is robust, but recent, so while many treatment centers are already adopting these timing changes some are still unaware of the impact.

9) Sleep is both disturbed by chemotherapy and also a critical component for recovery. Not only does good sleep improve mood and reduce stress, it also improves immune function. The dying tumor cells during chemotherapy can act like a “vaccine” against tumor recurrence, but only if your immune system is able to function well. While larger late-stage sleep disturbances are often managed with prescribed aids (Ambien, Lunesta, Trazodone, or Doxepin), earlier adjustments have a lot of value both for quality of life and treatment efficacy. In addition to common recommendations (limit caffeine after noon, limit screen time two hours before bed, set regular sleep and wake times, etc.) good results have been seen with the non-standard amino acid Theanine which appears to both improve sleep quality and reduce anxiety while also directly enhancing chemotherapy responses. Melatonin also has significant evidence of improving insomnia and sleep quality, but doesn’t have the added benefits of anti-anxiety and anti-tumor efficacy. Magnesium, while helpful in getting you to sleep (treating insomnia), is not as helpful for staying asleep or improving the quality of sleep and is often overused during chemotherapy with minor benefits. Magnesium can be depleted by certain chemotherapy regimens, so if you are taking platin drugs or EGFR inhibitors please do supplement with Magnesium regardless of your sleep needs.

10) Exercise has been proven to reduce both duration of fatigue during chemotherapy and also to prevent cancer recurrence, but to get that effect it has to be the right type of exercise and at the right time. Do you know when and what type? Walking, while good for general health, doesn’t have the benefits that more intense aerobic exercise does—twenty minutes three times per week of any exercise that leaves you able to talk briefly but not continuously while doing it, and doesn’t leave you drained afterward, is ideal. While it can be difficult to find the energy to exercise while fatigued, there is solid evidence that consistent anaerobic exercise reduces both the severity and duration of overall fatigue and also increases treatment efficacy – keep that in mind when it is hard to motivate.

Disclaimer

The information provided in this guide is for educational purposes only and is not intended as medical advice. It should not be used as a substitute for professional medical care, diagnosis, or treatment. Always consult with your oncologist, physician, or qualified healthcare provider regarding your individual medical condition and treatment options. Dr. Jay Chaplin is not acting as your personal physician, and working with him does not replace the guidance of your medical team. Reliance on any information provided here is solely at your own discretion.

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A photograph of a large tree with thick, gnarled roots covered in green moss. The roots spread out across the forest floor, which is covered with fallen autumn leaves in shades of orange, yellow, and brown. The background shows more trees with vibrant autumn foliage.

“Your present circumstances don’t determine where you can go; they merely determine where you start.”

- *Nido Qubein*