

Natural Health Products

What are natural health products?

Natural health products are vitamins, minerals, herbs and other supplements that you take to add to the nutrients you get from food. They are sometimes taken in higher amounts than you can get through your diet.

Why should I avoid taking natural health products during cancer treatment?

The effect of taking natural health products during cancer treatment is unpredictable. Some natural health products work in ways that could prevent your cancer treatment from being as effective as it could be.

Therefore, the use of natural health products during cancer treatment medications, cellular therapy (including bone marrow transplantation), or surgery is not recommended.

Before you start treatment, please tell your cancer care team about all medications (prescribed and over the counter) and supplements (including natural health products) you are taking so they can discuss it with you.

Should I be careful about the food I eat?

Food sources usually do not need to be restricted during cancer treatment. Your cancer care team will tell you if there are certain foods to avoid during treatment. There is not a special diet you need to follow while having cancer treatment. For more information about eating well during cancer treatment, please ask to be referred to a registered dietitian at your cancer treatment centre.

What about when I am finished with my cancer care treatments?

After you fully finish your cancer treatments, your cancer care team can help you determine if you may safely take natural health products.

Looking for more health information?

Find this brochure and all our patient resources here: <http://library.nshealth.ca/cancer>

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.

For more information, go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

Patient and family feedback is very important to us.

We would like to invite you to send any comments or suggestions on how to improve this booklet to education.cancercare@nshealth.ca or feel free to call us at 1-866-599-2267.

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This pamphlet is for educational purposes only.

It is not intended to replace the advice or professional judgment of a health care provider.

If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.