

What to expect from chemotherapy treatment

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ternative to death.

Nausea and vomiting are among the most dreaded side effects of chemotherapy. The frequency and severity of these side effects depends on the drugs the individual is receiving and how they affect the patient. Nausea and vomiting may start a few hours after treatment and last a short time. Sometimes, but less often, severe nausea and vomiting can last for a few days. Symptoms can almost always be lessened by a change in eating habits and with antiemetic medications (drugs to help alleviate the nausea and vomiting). Fatigue or loss of energy is

another common side effect of chemotherapy. It can range from mild lethargy to feeling completely 'wiped out'. Fatigue tends to be the worst at the beginning and at the end of a treatment cycle. Like most other side effects, fatigue will disappear once chemotherapy is complete.

Hair loss (alopecia) can be devastating. Not all chemotherapy drugs result in alopecia. Some people experience only mild thinning of the hair that is barely noticeable. Your doctor will be able to tell you if a medication is likely to result in hair loss. If it does occur, hair almost always grows back after the treatments are over.

However, it might be a different color or texture. Hair loss can occur on all parts of the body, not just the head. Facial hair, arm and leg hair, underarm hair, and pubic hair may all be affected. And it usually doesn't happen right away. More often, hair loss begins after a few treatments. At that point, hair may fall out gradually or in clumps.

Some people may choose to wear turbans, scarves, caps, wigs, or hairpieces. Others leave their heads uncovered depending on their comfort level.

While the side-effects from chemotherapy may seem overwhelming, the benefits from this treatment are a longer life and perhaps a

complete cure of the cancer. If you or a loved one are diagnosed with cancer, it is important to have an in-depth conversation with the physician regarding the po-

tential risks and benefits of chemotherapy treatment.

Contributed by John Stewart IV, MD
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Tourists seeking out Gullah culture along the S.C. coast

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out by others. Government officials and cultural institutions are taking measures to preserve and promote the uniqueness of Gullah culture.

And bus tours, restaurants, museums and galleries are attracting a growing number of tourists searching for the full history of the region.

"It's like the hidden secret that no one ever talked about," said Alphonso Brown, who grew up Gullah on a farm without running water and now runs Gullah Tours. "Of course if there is something that is hidden and then revealed, everyone is talking about it."

Gullah communities were established on the sea islands by freed slaves after the Civil War. Most made their livings fishing or farming fields of vegetables and row crops. The word Gullah may be derived from Gola, the name of a West African tribe.

Brown, a retired school teacher and band director, has been giving his tours for more than two decades. When he started, the busiest times were in the spring and fall, the top tourism seasons in Charleston. Now he's booked year-round, except for January when the winter slows business. Even then, he gives tours for corporate groups.

His tours provide a glimpse of things one might miss on a more traditional tour of the city's pastel buildings and historic sites.

There's the Old Slave Mart; a house lived in by Denmark Vesey, who planned an 1822 slave insurrection; and Catfish Row, which inspired the George Gershwin opera "Porgy and Bess."

"There are slave quarters all over the place," says Brown, who navigates the narrow city streets in a small white bus. "The house guides and the Realtors and other people don't say 'slave quarters,' they say 'carriage houses' or 'servants' quarters' or 'dependencies'."

Brown's tours depart near the Charleston Visitors Center just down the street from Gallery Chuma, which does a brisk business in Gullah art.

Artists include the noted Jonathan Green as well as John Jones, whose bright paintings "Confederate Currency: The Color of Money," reproduced scenes of slavery from Confederate bills and Southern bank notes.

"There's definitely a lot of interest in the Gullah culture," said gallery owner Chuma Nwokike, a native of Nigeria who graduated from The Citadel. "People come in and say they want to go to Gullah, Gullah Island and I say it's nothing like that."

There was a children's TV show called "Gullah, Gullah Island" in the mid-90s on Nickelodeon, but there is no real place with that name.

Tourists can visit Gullah communities at real places like Wadmalaw Island and St. Helena Island—where some segments of the show were filmed. But the culture is experienced with more than simple sightseeing. It's

about food, listening to the Gullah language, and learning about the culture at museums like that at the Avery Research Center for African-American History and Culture at the College of Charleston.

Gullah is a Creole language—a language that develops when people who can't understand each other remain in long contact, as the slaves did with their captors. Linguists say there are structural differences between Gullah and English that justify it being considered a separate language.

A New Testament in Gullah was published two years ago, to the delight of people like Carolyn Jabulile White, who grew up Gullah and now entertains by telling stories in Gullah to groups and visitors.

"It's nice to see it in a Bible because when you go to the funerals and to the weddings and the gatherings on the islands, you heard it all the time," White said. "I'm glad it's done, because when I'm gone, my children, my grandchildren, those behind

will know we certainly had a very rich heritage and culture as a people."

Amanda Manning, of Carolina Food Pros, helps tourists learn about Gullah through some of her culinary tours that stop at restaurants that offer Gullah cuisine.

"Okra, eggplant, peanuts and watermelon were all brought here during the slave trade," she said. "The African slaves grew these things and were very familiar with them."

Indeed, she said, much of what we know as Southern cooking really comes from the slaves.

"The Africans were the cooks," Manning said. "They cooked in their own slave cabins and they cooked in the big houses. The truth is most of them taught most of us how to cook."

About an hour's drive south of Charleston, nestled amid oaks shrouded by Spanish moss on St. Helena is the Penn Center with its museum, site of one of the first schools in the nation for freed slaves.

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