



## **What is immunotherapy?**

Immunotherapy refers to a group of medications that are given via an IV (given intravenously). These drugs work to fight cancer by enhancing your own immune system.

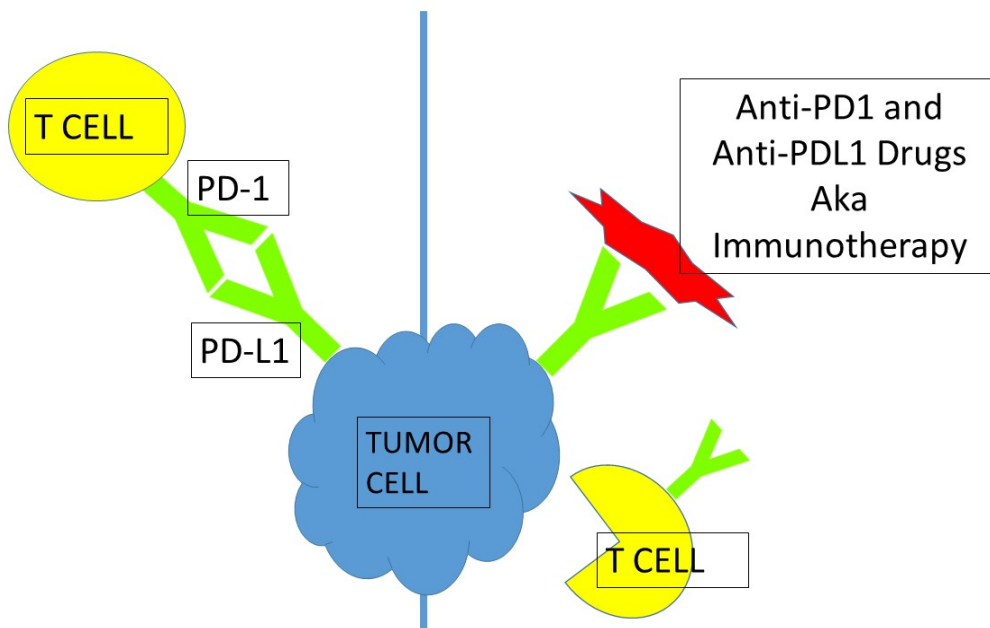
## **How is immunotherapy different from chemotherapy?**

Chemotherapy works by **directly** killing cancer cells. Immunotherapy works **indirectly** by stimulating your immune system to kill cancer cells.

## **How does immunotherapy work?**

The immune system already knows how to fight cancer; it just needs a little help.

- The immune system's main cancer fighters are called T cells.
- T cells patrol your body for signs of infection or cancer.
- Many cancer cells carry proteins called PD-L1, which can block the T cell's cancer fighting abilities.
- PD-L1 acts like a trap for the T cells.
- When the T cell connects with PD-L1, the T cell shuts down and can no longer attack the cancer.
- Immunotherapy works by blocking the trap. It prevents PD-L1 proteins from working thus allowing the T cell to attack the cancer cell.



### **What are common side effects of immunotherapy?**

The side effects of immunotherapy are different than chemotherapy. With immunotherapy, you won't lose your hair, your blood counts won't decrease and it is rare to throw up. Immunotherapy may cause other side effects.

- Immunotherapy may cause side effects that result from the immune system being overactive. These effects may include fever, sweats and fatigue.
- Immunotherapy may also cause symptoms related to inflammation in specific parts of the body. These include a rash, itching, diarrhea, shortness of breath or inflammation of the liver, kidneys or thyroid gland

Talk with your oncologist about the potential side effects for your specific treatment.

## Is immunotherapy for me?

- Immunotherapy works much better for some cancers than for others. Currently, immunotherapy is only approved for certain cancer types. Talk with your oncologist to determine if immunotherapy is approved for your cancer.

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