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- Chemotherapy
- Surgery
- Radiation
- Chemotherapy
- Immunotherapy
- Hormone therapy
- Targeted drug therapies
- Other medicines used as part of treatment, such as steroids, anti-nausea, or pain medicines

Other things can increase the risk of changes in thinking or make these changes worse, such as:

- The cancer itself, such as brain tumors
- Other conditions or illnesses, such as diabetes or high blood pressure
- Symptoms of cancer or cancer treatment, such as tiredness, pain, or trouble sleeping
- Infection
- Stress, anxiety, or depression
- Low red blood cell counts (anemia)
- Hormone changes, such as being post-menopausal
- Not eating enough or getting the right nutrients in your diet
- Older age
- Being weak or frail
- Using alcohol or other substances that can affect your brain

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- Concentrating (not being able to focus on what you're doing, having a short attention span, or losing track of what's going on around you)
- Remembering details like names, dates, and events
- Coming up with ideas, planning activities, and making decisions (executive dysfunction)

with changes in thinking.

Tips to manage changes in memory, thinking, and focus

As you cope with these changes, you might want to:

- **Use a daily planner, notebook, notes, or your smartphone for reminders.** Keeping everything in one place makes it easier to find the reminders you may need. Keep track of appointments, to-do lists, important dates, phone numbers and addresses, and meeting notes. You might even want to write down movies you'd like to see or books you'd like to read.
 - **Set up routines and follow them.** Try to stick to the same daily schedule.
 - **Pick a certain place to keep items that often get lost,** like your keys or the remote. Put each item in its place after you use it.
 - **Try to focus on one thing at a time.**
 - **Do your hardest tasks when you have the most energy.**
 - **Exercise your brain.** Do puzzles, solve word games, paint pictures, play an instrument, or learn a new hobby.
 - **Try to get enough rest and sleep.**
 - **Ask for help when you need it.** Having friends and loved ones help with daily tasks can cut down on distractions and help you save mental energy.
- Track your memory problems.** Keep a diary or log of when you notice problems and what's going on.

Tell your friends and family members what they can do to help. Their support and understanding can help you relax and make it easier for you to focus and process information.

When to talk with your doctor or cancer care team

Let your cancer care team know if you have any changes in your memory, thinking, or focus. You might notice these changes soon after diagnosis, during treatment, or after treatment ends. Try to explain:

- What you are feeling
- If there are certain times of day you notice these changes the most
- What seems to make the changes better or worse
- How these changes are affecting your life
- Other symptoms that seem to be related, such as fatigue, trouble sleeping, pain, or stress

You might also want to ask about focused rehabilitation to help you manage specific changes in focus, thinking, and memory.

Questions to ask about changes in memory, thinking, and focus

Here are some questions you may want to ask your doctor:

Am I at risk for changes in memory, thinking, or focus?

effects/memory on November 22, 2023.

National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN). Survivorship. Version 1.2023.

nccn.org. Accessed at

https://www.nccn.org/professionals/physician_gls/pdf/survivorship.pdf on November 22,