

# WHAT YOUR ONCOLOGY PHARMACIST DOES

An oncology pharmacist is someone who has received special training that is focused on how to tailor, manage, and prepare medicines used to treat cancer. These medicines are not simple. The pharmacist must understand these medications, and learn about you, before you receive your treatment. There are several types of oncology pharmacists you may meet throughout your journey. Infusion Pharmacists prepare your cancer therapy, Specialty Pharmacists verify and dispense oral cancer therapies for self-administration, and Clinical Pharmacists work with you and your team to optimize your treatment. Oncology pharmacists try to give you, your physicians, and other members of your cancer team important information to make sure you get the best result from your medicines.

Here are some examples of the role of your oncology pharmacist:

## INFUSION ONCOLOGY PHARMACIST



Infusion Oncology Pharmacists work in infusion centers where cancer treatments are given through a vein or by injection.

Infusion Oncology Pharmacists often do the following:

- Look carefully at the medicines ordered by the provider.
- Look at what your provider has learned about your body (from the results of tests your doctor has ordered) to make sure that it is safe for you to take the medicine.
- Review other prescribed medicines, over-the-counter products, or vitamins you are taking that could affect the way your cancer medicine works.
- Make sure that you get the right medicine and correct dose for you.

Your pharmacy team is responsible for the medicine you take.

Although this process takes time, it is important to ensure that your medication is carefully prepared and customized for your needs.

## CLINICAL ONCOLOGY PHARMACIST



The Clinical Oncology Pharmacist may work at a clinic or hospital directly with your healthcare team to take care of you and help choose the best medicines.

Clinical Oncology Pharmacists may help with the following:

- Review your currently prescribed medications, over-the-counter medications, supplements, and vitamins to ensure they can be safely taken with your cancer treatment. Some of your medications can alter the effectiveness of your cancer treatment so your pharmacists will discuss these with you and your care team.
- Provide education about your cancer treatment, including side effects and common ways to reduce those side effects. They may talk with you about other medications that can be used to treat those side effects as well.
- Recommend the best dose and treatment based on test results, other chronic conditions you may have, or side effects to prior medications.
- Evaluate the best treatment option for you, including research trials.

## SPECIALTY PHARMACIST



Specialty Pharmacists may also be part of the team preparing and dispensing oral cancer medications to you from a specialty pharmacy. They may even work directly with the care team to make sure that your oral cancer medications are safe and appropriate for you. Specialty Pharmacists do the following:

- Confirm that what the pharmacy is filling matches what the cancer care team has ordered.
- Double check that the medication ordered is appropriate for your type of cancer and with your other medications.
- Educate on at-home therapies that are being dispensed to you.
- Help obtain oral or injectable medications that can be taken at home.
- Work with you and your healthcare team to obtain medication at an affordable cost to you.

Please refer to [Taking Cancer Medications by Mouth](#) for more information on these types of medications.