

# Swelling

## (Fluid retention)



“My hands and feet were swollen and puffy. My nurse helped me understand why I had to stop eating salty foods.”

### Call your doctor or nurse if you:

- **Feel short of breath**
- **Have a heartbeat that seems different or is not regular**
- **Have sudden swelling or swelling that is getting worse**
- **Gain weight quickly**
- **Don't urinate at all or urinate only a little**

### What causes swelling?

Swelling can be caused by the chemotherapy. Some types of cancer or hormone changes can also cause swelling. So can other health problems.

### Tell your doctor or nurse if you have these changes:

- Swelling in your face, hands, arms, legs, or feet
- Swelling or bloating in your stomach or lower belly

### Take these steps to prevent swelling:

#### Get comfortable.

- Ask about special stockings.
- Wear loose clothing and shoes that are not too tight.

#### Raise your feet.

- Raise your feet when you can. Sit or lie down and put your feet up on a stool. Or raise them with pillows.
- Try not to stand or walk too much at one time.



## Weigh yourself.

- Weigh yourself at the same time every day.
- Tell your doctor or nurse if you gain weight.



## Questions to ask your doctor or nurse:

1. What problems should I call you about?
2. How much weight gain should I call you about?
3. What foods should I eat less of?
4. What can help me feel better?

## Stay away from salt.

- Don't eat food such as chips, bacon, ham, or canned soups. These have a lot of salt (sodium) in them.
- Don't add salt or soy sauce to your food.
- Check the food label to see if the food has sodium in it. Ask your nurse how much salt or sodium you can have.



### FREE SERVICES TO LEARN MORE

#### National Cancer Institute Cancer Information Service

**Phone:** 1-800-4-CANCER (1-800-422-6237)

**TTY:** 1-800-332-8615

**Online:** [www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov)

**Chat Online:** [www.cancer.gov/help](http://www.cancer.gov/help)



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