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## Neoadjuvant Chemotherapy

**Neoadjuvant chemotherapy** refers to chemotherapy that is given before other treatments, such as surgery or radiation therapy. This can be very important when a tumor is large compared to the size of the breast and the patient prefers breast-conserving surgery (lumpectomy) to remove the lump. Neoadjuvant chemotherapy is also used to treat inflammatory breast cancer or any cancer that appears to be very aggressive. The goal of neoadjuvant chemotherapy is to control the tumor first by chemotherapy and then to follow with surgery and/or radiation treatments.

A great advantage of neoadjuvant chemotherapy is that the oncologist can monitor how well the tumor will shrink or respond to the selected chemotherapy treatment. If the tumor is shrinking or responding as anticipated, the oncologist knows that the drugs selected are effective against the tumor. If it proves not to be effective, the oncologist can change the drug to another type early in the treatment cycle and continue to monitor the tumor's response.

If neoadjuvant chemotherapy is a part of your treatment plan, ask your oncologist why this therapy has been selected for your breast cancer treatment.

### ***Additional Information:***

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