

Tingling in Hands/Feet

Online version with active resource links at: <http://cancer-help.me/tingling>

Peripheral Neuropathy -

Is the medical word for tingling in the hands and/or feet, or numbness.

Some cancer treatments cause peripheral neuropathy, a result of damage to the peripheral nerves. These nerves carry information from the brain to other parts of the body. Side effects depend on which peripheral nerves are affected.

If you start to notice any of the problems listed to the right, talk with your care team. You may be prescribed pain medicine. Sometimes practices such as acupuncture, massage, physical therapy, yoga, and others may also be advised to lower pain.

Early diagnosis and treatment is the best way to control the problems, prevent further damage, and to reduce pain and other complications.

Damage to sensory nerves, help you feel pain, heat, cold, and pressure, can cause:

- tingling, numbness, or a feeling of pins-and-needles in your hands and feet spreading to the arms or legs.
- inability to feel a hot or cold sensation, such as a hot stove
- inability to feel pain, such as from a cut or sore on your foot

Damage to motor nerves, that help your muscles move can cause:

- weak or achy muscles. You may lose your balance or trip easily. It may also be difficult to button shirts or open jars
- muscles that twitch and cramp or muscle wasting (if you don't use your muscles regularly)
- swallowing or breathing difficulties (if chest, throat muscles are affected)

Damage to autonomic nerves, that control functions such as blood pressure, digestion, heart rate, temperature, & urination can cause:

- digestive changes such as constipation or diarrhea
- dizzy or faint feeling, due to low blood pressure
- sexual problems; men may be unable to get an erection and women may not reach orgasm
- sweating problems (either too much or too little)
- urination problems, leaking urine or difficulty emptying your bladder

Ways to Prevent or Manage Problems Related to Nerve Changes and Prevent Falls.

Move rugs out of your path so you will not trip on them. Install rails on the walls and in the bathroom, so you can hold on to them for balance. Put bathmats in the shower or tub. Wear sturdy shoes with soft soles. Get up slowly after sitting or lying down, especially if you feel dizzy.

Take extra care in the kitchen and shower. Use potholders in the kitchen to protect your hands from burns. Be careful when handling knives or sharp objects. Ask someone to check the water temperature, to make sure it's not too hot.

Protect your hands and feet. Wear shoes, both inside and outside. Check your arms, legs, and feet for cuts or scratches every day. When it's cold, wear warm clothes to protect your hands and feet.

Ask for help and slow down. Let people help you with difficult tasks. Slow down and give yourself more time to do things.

Content adapted from websites below.

Resources for Additional Information:

- [American Cancer Society. Peripheral Neuropathy Caused By Chemotherapy](#)
- [Cancer.Net. Peripheral Neuropathy](#)
- [NIH, Nerve Problems \(Peripheral Neuropathy\) & Cancer Treatment](#)
- [Chemocare. Numbness & Tingling](#)
- [CancerCare.org. Coping With Nerve Damage \(Neuropathy\)](#)

Recursos en Español:

- [NIH, Instituto Nacional Del Cáncer, Problemas de los nervios \(neuropatía periférica\)](#)
- [Cancer.Net. Neuropatía periférica](#)
- [Chemocare. Entumecimiento y hormigueo](#)