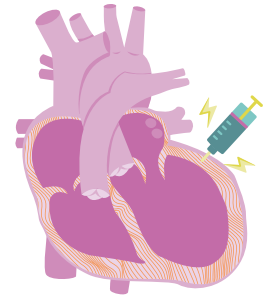


# Cardiotoxicity & Cancer

Cancer treatments can be hard on the body and may sometimes affect the heart. Your care team will watch your health closely during and after treatment to help keep your heart as healthy as possible.

## What is cardiotoxicity, and how does it relate to cancer?

- Cardiotoxicity is damage to the heart caused by certain cancer treatments, such as chemotherapy or radiation given near the heart.
- Some chemotherapy medicines that may affect the heart are called anthracyclines. Examples include doxorubicin, daunorubicin, and mitoxantrone.

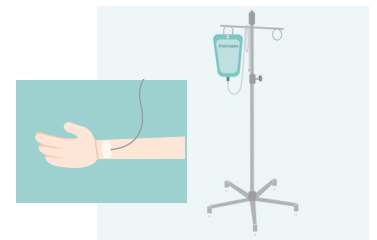


## What damage occurs to the heart and when?

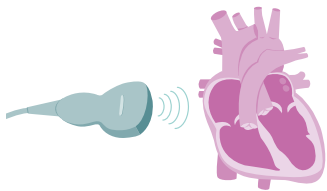
- The most common problem is weakening of the heart muscle, which makes it harder to pump blood to the body and may lead to symptoms of heart failure.
- This damage can occur at any time—during treatment, shortly after, or even years later.
- The type and dose of cancer therapy can affect how severe the damage may be.

## Can cardiotoxicity be prevented?

- A medicine called dexrazoxane may help limit damage to the heart if it is given prior to anthracycline doses. Ask your oncology care team if this is right for your child.



## What are ways to look for damage?



- Taking pictures of the heart, most often with an **ultrasound** called an **echocardiogram**.
- Checking the heart's rhythm with an **EKG (electrocardiogram)**, which reads signals from stickers placed on the chest, arms, and legs.
- Using other tests to look for cardiotoxicity, such as an **MRI** scan of the heart or a **stress test** (which may involve exercise while being monitored and wearing EKG stickers).

## What if the tests find something abnormal?

- Your child's care may include seeing a cardiologist (heart specialist), who may prescribe medicines to help the heart work better.
- Ask your child's oncologist if there is a cardio-oncology program nearby. These programs have cardiologists who provide the best long-term support for heart problems related to cancer treatment.