Calcium is a chemical in your blood that helps the body work properly. It affects the nerves and muscles, the digestive tract, the way the heart works, and the kidney system. When the calcium level becomes too high, you may develop one or more symptoms in these areas.

A high calcium level may occur because:
- cancer has spread to the bones, causing calcium to be released into the bloodstream
- cancer may release certain hormones that can cause an increase in calcium
- hormone problems occur with the parathyroid gland
- there is too much vitamin D in the body

What are the symptoms of high calcium?
You and your family members should know what signs to look for. The symptoms may develop slowly or happen in a short amount of time.

Tell your doctor or nurse if you have any of these symptoms:
- extreme weakness
- loss of appetite
- nausea and vomiting
- abdominal (belly) pain
- constipation
- frequent urination
- changes in your heartbeat, too fast or too slow
- extreme thirst and/or dry mouth
- excessive sleepiness and/or fatigue
- confusion
- coma

How is high calcium treated?
Drink 3 to 4 quarts of fluid each day. This will help your body rid itself of the excess calcium.

Walk as much as possible. If you are not able to walk, try to get out of bed 2 to 3 times per day to sit in a chair. This will help prevent further loss of calcium from the bones.

Your doctor may need to order medicine to take by mouth or through an IV (intravenous) if your calcium level is too high.

Remember to:
- Keep appointments with your doctor.
- Call your doctor or nurse if any of the symptoms occur or get worse, or if you have any questions or concerns.