

After Chemotherapy

A blood test should be done before each cycle of chemotherapy. Blood tests are strongly encouraged to be completed the day prior to your chemotherapy appointment.

You may be given the following medications to take at home following chemotherapy:

Compazine: _____

Decadron: _____

Zofran: _____

Emend: _____

Zarxio: _____

Please notify the Chemotherapy Nurses, Oncology Pharmacy, or your Oncology doctor if you experience any of the following symptoms:

- Temperature 100.5°F or above, or if you have shaking chills
- Any unusual bruising or bleeding
- Nausea and/or vomiting that is not controlled with medication
- Diarrhea that is not controlled with medication
- Pain that is not controlled by medication
- Constipation
- Severe fatigue or shortness of breath
- Any discomfort or sores in your mouth
- Any condition that causes concern or discomfort

You may notice that your nurse wears protective equipment (gloves, gown, etc.) when administering your chemotherapy to protect her or himself from being exposed to the medications. You, your caregivers, and family members must also protect yourselves against exposure. This handout will review how to safely handle chemotherapy medicines and your body waste when at home.

Handling Body Waste

Chemotherapy medication is released from the body through urine, stool, vomit, and blood for 48 hours after your treatment has stopped. The guidelines listed below should be followed during that time:

- After using the toilet, close the lid and flush twice. Men should urinate sitting down to avoid splashing.
- After using the toilet, wash your hands well with soap and water. If any fluids splashed on your skin, clean the area with soap and water.
- Wear gloves when cleaning the toilet or cleaning up any urine, stool, or vomit or changing diapers/incontinence pads. Wash your hands with the gloves on, then remove the gloves, dispose of them in the trash, and wash your hands again.
- If using a bedpan or urinal, wear gloves and dump contents into the toilet close to the water to limit splashing. While wearing the gloves, wash the container with soap and water after each use.
- Diapers can be disposed of in the regular trash.
- If you have an ostomy, wear gloves when emptying and wash the collection bag once a day with soap and water.

Handling Trash or Laundry

When handling trash or laundry that has come in contact with chemotherapy or body fluids within 48 hours after treatment:

- Wear gloves to handle contaminated trash or laundry. Wash your hands before and after removing the gloves.
- Contaminated trash can be placed in special bags if you were supplied with these or doubled bagged in a plastic, leak-proof bags.
- If possible, wash contaminated laundry right away. If you cannot wash it right away, place in a leak-proof plastic bag and wash as soon as possible.
- Wash contaminated laundry separate from a n other laundry, using regular laundry detergent and warm or hot water.

Handling Spills

If chemotherapy or body fluids (within 48 hours after treatment) are spilled or splashed:

- Wear gloves to clean up the spill/splash.
- Wipe up the spill with paper towels.
- Clean the area with soap and water and rinse using paper towels.
- Dispose of trash in specially marked containers (if you were provided with them) or double bag in leak-proof plastic bags.
- Wash hands before and after removing gloves.

Sexual Contact

Chemotherapy medications can also be excreted in body fluids, such as semen and vaginal fluid. To prevent exposure of these fluids for you or your partner:

- Use condoms during oral sex and intercourse for 48 hours after treatment.
- Effective birth control should be used throughout treatment to prevent pregnancy while on these medications and for several months or years after therapy. Chemotherapy can have harmful side effects to the fetus, especially in the first trimester. In addition, menstrual cycles can become irregular during and after treatment, so you may not know if you are at a time in your cycle when you could become pregnant or if you are pregnant.

Safety for My Family

- Hugging and kissing are safe for you and your partner and family members.
- You can visit, sit with, hug, and kiss the children in your life.
- You can be around pregnant women, though (if possible) they should not clean up any of your body fluids after you have treatment.
- You can share a bathroom with others. If body fluids splash on the toilet, wear gloves and clean the area with soap and water before others use the toilet.