



Patient Name: _____

Patient Teaching Guide for IV Chemotherapy at Home

While you are receiving chemotherapy medicine intravenously at home to treat your cancer, special care must be taken to prevent unnecessary exposure to you and your loved ones. Eating together, hugging and kissing are all safe as long as good hygiene is maintained. But, pregnant women should avoid direct contact with chemotherapy medicine and any of the waste products.

Here are some other safety tips to follow

- Chemotherapy medicine is time sensitive because it targets different cancer cell cycles. It is important to start and stop the medicine exactly as your doctor has determined. Your doctor, your nurse, and you, will coordinate these times.
- Tell your doctor or nurse of *any side effects* that you experience so that dose adjustments can be made. Remember, honest reporting of side effects can help you achieve better results.
- Laboratory tests are very important. The results of blood tests will help check for side effects and make sure you are getting the correct amounts of medication.
- Chemotherapy medicine and supplies should remain secured. Store your supplies, including your disposal container, off the floor, in a cool dry place, and away from children, pets, and visitors.
- Take precaution when disposing of your supplies.
 - Pharmacy delivered supplies: If a pharmacy is delivering your chemotherapy medicine to your home, there will also be a special container or bag to be used for proper disposal. All supplies used, including the entire empty medicine bag and tubing will be placed into this at the end of your cycle.
 - Doctor office supplies: If your chemotherapy medicine is started at the doctor's office, you will not have a special container. However, you will need to place your empty medicine bag and pump into a plastic bag and take it back with you to the doctor's office for proper disposal.

- Always wear gloves. Take precautions when handling your chemotherapy medicine and supplies. Chemotherapy is very strong and can be corrosive to your skin causing permanent damage. If your skin does become exposed to the chemotherapy medicine:
 - Wash area thoroughly with soap and water. If redness lasts more than 1 hour, notify your doctor.
 - If chemotherapy splashes in your eyes, immediately flush them with water for 10 – 15 minutes and call your doctor.
 - If your caregiver is giving you chemotherapy, they should protect themselves from any exposure to chemotherapy dust or liquid:
 - Wear powder free gloves, a mask, and a protective gown.
 - Throw the gloves and mask in the trash and wash hands as soon as possible.

- Not all chemotherapy medicine gets absorbed and used by your body. Unabsorbed chemotherapy medicine can stay in your body fluids for up to 7 days after you take them.
 - Protect your loved ones from any unnecessary exposure to all body fluids during this time
 - Gloves should be work when handling personal items that have been exposed to body fluids such as vomit, blood, urine, or feces.
 - Double flush the toilet after use with the lid down and use good hand washing habits.
 - Double wash soiled linens separately *and as soon as possible*.
 - If you do experience vomiting, your caregiver should wear gloves. Dispose of the vomit in the toilet, **double flush with the lid down** and then wash out the basin with soap and water.

- Speak to your doctor about sexual activity. Some IV chemotherapy medicines may be present in vaginal fluid or semen for up to 7 days after you take a dose.

Notes and Questions for my doctor or nurse: _____

References

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