

Haematology and Oncology Departments

Information for patients taking chemotherapy tablets/capsules or liquid

Department: Haematology or Oncology (Staff: please delete as necessary)

Your Name & Hospital No. (Staff: affix Banda label if available)

Treatment Regime: (Staff: please document)

Introduction

Please read this leaflet carefully. It will inform you about your chemotherapy, safety issues, warning symptoms and hospital contact details. You should read this leaflet along with our hospital Chemotherapy Information booklet and the individual fact sheet(s) on the chemotherapy tablets that you are taking. These pieces of information will inform you about the side effects you may experience as a result of this treatment. If you have not received any of these please ask your nurse or doctor.



Patient Information

Your oral chemotherapy

Chemotherapy tablets/liquid/capsules are also known as oral chemotherapy. Although it is given by mouth and not as an injection, there may still be side effects.

Many patients will be able to have their oral chemotherapy at home. In this case, the doctors and nurses will let you know the following:

- When to start taking your treatment;
- What time(s) to take your chemotherapy treatment;
- Whether to take them with or without food;
- How to store your chemotherapy.

Your haematology or oncology doctor will prescribe the chemotherapy treatment for you. **If you unexpectedly run out of tablets for any reason, contact the hospital without delay. Never obtain repeat prescriptions from your GP.** This is because your blood count needs to be tested before each prescription and the dose you are given may need changing or the chemotherapy discontinuing depending on the result. This decision will be made by the specialist doctors looking after you at the hospital.

This chemotherapy treatment may cause your blood counts to become low, so these will be monitored by having a blood test at each clinic visit. You will be advised when to have your blood test, so that we have your result before the appointment with the doctor.

Safety issues with oral chemotherapy

- You will be informed how to store your chemotherapy, such as in the fridge or at room temperature.
- Please store your chemotherapy tablets safely and keep them out of the reach of children.
- Take special care when preparing to take your tablets not to confuse them with any other tablets.
- Never allow anybody else to take these tablets.

Patient Information

- Please use a non-touch technique (the nurse will show you how to do this). If you are unable to do this avoid touching the drugs as much as possible, washing your hands afterwards.
- If someone else is giving you the chemotherapy tablets they should wear hospital gloves when handling the drugs to protect themselves. Please ask the nursing staff for these if required.
- If you have chemotherapy tablets or liquid left at the end of your treatment, please return it to the hospital pharmacy for safe disposal and **do not dispose of them in the toilet or via Council rubbish collections.**
- If you forget to take your chemotherapy do not take double the dose, but contact your hospital doctor or nurse specialist for advice.
- Do not crush/break/dissolve your chemotherapy medication unless advised to do so at the time they are prescribed for you.

Warning Symptoms To Watch Out For:

Nausea/Vomiting: You will be given some anti-sickness medication to use at home if needed. However, if nausea or vomiting does occur, please telephone the department from which you received the chemotherapy treatment and ask for advice.

Infection/bleeding: If your blood count becomes low, there is a risk of infection or bleeding. This can be serious and requires urgent attention. **If you notice any of the symptoms listed below you should contact the hospital immediately** (do not cause delay by contacting your GP). Phone numbers are listed at the end of this information sheet.

- **Fever: a temperature of 38°C or more (37°C is normal)**
- **Shivers or shakes (feeling hot or cold)**
- **Excessive bruising, blood spots on the skin or abnormal bleeding from anywhere (e.g. nose, gums, bowel)**
- **Feeling generally unwell for no obvious reason**
- **Severe vomiting, diarrhoea or exhaustion**
- **Coughing up phlegm (especially if yellow/green)**
- **An ulcerated sore mouth, e.g. if drinking becomes difficult**
- **Burning or stinging on passing urine**

Patient Information

During working hours, and up to 8.00pm, you may be advised to attend the Haematology or Oncology Ward, Day Unit, Outpatients Clinic or the Arden Cancer Centre Chemotherapy Suite, where you will be assessed and further treatment given.

After 8.00pm, both Coventry and Rugby patients may be asked to come to the Accident and Emergency (A&E) department at University Hospital, but the nurses from the ward will liaise closely with the A&E department regarding your treatment. Out of hours, you should expect the doctor seeing you to contact the haematology/oncology consultant or registrar for advice.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to ask the doctor or specialist nurse in your clinic or on the ward.

Contact Details

Haematology Department

If you are under the care of a Haematologist please contact the following:

9am - 5pm, Mon - Fri	Haematology Day Unit	(024) 7696 5491
Any time, any day	Ward 34 (Haematology)	(024) 7696 5390/5386

Oncology Department

If you are under the care of an Oncologist please contact the following:

9am - 5pm, Mon - Fri	Chemotherapy Suite	(024) 7696 7272
Any time, any day	Ward 35 (Oncology)	(024) 7696 5525

For further support and information

The Cancer Information Centre

Our Cancer Information Specialist can offer free support, advice and information. The centre is based in the Main Entrance of the University Hospital in Coventry.

The service is open Monday – Friday, 9am - 4pm.

Phone number: 024 7696 6052

Patient Information

Patient satisfaction

We welcome your comments on the quality of our service and the care you receive in our departments. If you have a specific complaint, please inform a member of staff so that it can be dealt with speedily and efficiently.

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact 024 7696 5546 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy.

Document History

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