

Cancer Services

Information for you: Chemotherapy

You and your family may want to know more about your condition, possible treatments and living with cancer. This leaflet aims to guide you to staff and services that can give you further information. The information available is listed on pages 2 and 3.

You will have been told about the side effects of your particular chemotherapy treatment. You will find more general information about what to expect in the chemotherapy booklet you receive.

If you develop a serious infection whilst you are having chemotherapy treatment, we ask you to contact us urgently. It is important to treat this complication quickly. You may need to be treated in hospital with intravenous antibiotics (delivered through a drip).

Your **RED** emergency card has telephone numbers of who to contact. We ask you to keep this card with you and show it to your doctor if you are unwell. This will make sure those caring for you are aware that you are having chemotherapy treatment.

This type of infection is known as **neutropenic sepsis**. It happens because chemotherapy affects the production of blood cells. When you have less white blood cells (neutrophils), you are more prone to infection. Regular blood checks are a part of your treatment regime. Although chemotherapy regimes vary, you are most likely to develop an infection between 7 and 14 days after chemotherapy, when your blood count is at its lowest.



Patient Information

The symptoms are:

- Fever (temperature above 38° C)
- Feeling hot and cold/ shaking and shivering
- Excessive bruising or severe bleeding
- Feeling very unwell even with a normal temperature
- Redness, discomfort, swelling or irritation around the injection site/ PICC/ Hickman line or Portacath
- Pain when peeing
- Severe vomiting or diarrhoea
- An ulcerated mouth making drinking difficult

Contact the team where you usually have your chemotherapy or contact the ward if you need to call after hours:

Arden Cancer Centre Chemotherapy Suite **024 7696 7272**

Monday to Friday 9.00am to 6.00pm

Haematology Day Unit **024 7696 5491**

Monday to Friday 9.00am to 5.00pm

Ward 34 (Haematology) **024 7696 5390**

Anytime day or night

Ward 35 (Oncology) **024 7696 5528**

Anytime day or night

Usually, essential information is given to you by your **nursing staff**:

- Chemotherapy booklet
- Emergency contact card
- Specific treatment fact sheets

Patient Information

- Avoiding infection fact sheet
- Food safety leaflet information
- Macmillan Cancer Support contact card

This information and more is also available from **The Cancer Information Centre** which is situated in the main entrance of the hospital:

- Booklets about specific cancers and treatments
- Coping with side effects like fatigue, hair loss, nausea and vomiting
- Emotional effects of cancer and information to support carers including how to talk to children and others
- Cancer genetics
- Avoiding infection, mouth care, diet and cancer
- Travel and cancer, work and cancer
- Complementary therapies, sexuality and cancer
- Cancer Trials
- Controlling the symptoms of cancer, information about peripheral neuropathy
- Adjusting to life after cancer treatment
- Financial and social services information
- Contact details for local and national charities and support groups

Hospital Information contacts

If you cannot access the internet, please contact the Cancer Information Centre, where they will help you obtain the relevant information.

Cancer Information Centre Monday to Friday 8am to 4pm
024 7696 6052

National information sources:

Cancer Research UK Free phone 0808 800 4040
Monday to Friday (9.00am – 5.00pm) www.cancerhelp.org.uk

Macmillan Cancer Support Free phone 0808 808 00 00
Monday to Friday (9.00am – 8.00pm) www.macmillan.org.uk

Patient Information

Free prescriptions

Patients diagnosed with cancer or still affected by side effects of disease or treatment are entitled to free prescriptions. Please ask about an exemption certificate.

Hospital car parking

Patients receiving chemotherapy/ radiotherapy as an outpatient will receive free car parking for treatment appointments and some patients may be entitled to reimbursement of expenses if they receive certain benefits. please ask for details.

Joined in Cancer Support Group

A support group open to anyone affected by cancer, including carers. The group meets on the first Wednesday of every month at Coventry Myton Hospice.

The group offers a warm and welcoming environment which aims to answer questions or discuss things you are worried about or listen to experiences of other people who understand what you're going through. For more information contact the Cancer Information and Support manager on 02476 966052

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact your department and they will do their best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy.

To give feedback on this leaflet please email feedback@uhcw.nhs.uk

Document History

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