

Department of Urology

About BCG Bladder Treatment

Your doctor has explained to you that you have a bladder condition called non-muscle invasive bladder cancer. He may have described this condition as being like warts', tumours or growths in your bladder. These growths may recur and in order to reduce the likelihood of this happening your doctor has prescribed a drug treatment for your bladder. The purpose of this leaflet is to tell you about this treatment.

What treatment am I having?

Your doctor has prescribed a drug called BCG, which was originally developed as a vaccine for tuberculosis, but it is also useful in treating bladder cancer. It achieves this by working to stimulate the body's natural defences against the disease. Your doctor will have prescribed weekly treatments for six weeks followed by maintenance treatments every 3 to 6 months.

How is the treatment given?

The nurse carrying out your treatment passes a fine tube called a catheter into your bladder. After draining any urine out, the drug is introduced into your bladder through the catheter. The catheter is usually then removed and you are asked to hold the drug in your bladder for two hours. On your first visit you will be expected to remain at the hospital for at least 15 minutes following treatment. Provided you have no adverse reaction to the instillation, you will then be allowed home, with instructions and advice on passing and disposal of urine. The nurse will confirm your next treatment date before you leave the hospital.

For future treatments, if no difficulties have been experienced, the nurse may allow you to go home directly after the medication has been put into



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your bladder for the remainder of the course. If you are allowed to go home, please do not have any drinks until you have held the drug for the prescribed period of time.

What side effects may I experience?

You may experience, some side effects from this treatment, the most common being: pain or burning when you pass urine, blood in your urine, having to pass urine more frequently, and flu-like symptoms such as fever, headache, joint pain and fatigue for up to 48 hours after each treatment. If these symptoms persist for more than two days or are very severe, you should contact your doctor, or nurse on **024 7696 5149** or contact your own GP.

What should I do before each treatment?

Do not drink any fluids for four hours before your treatment. However you should take your routine medicines with a minimal amount of water. You may have your breakfast and/or lunch. Have a bath or shower before attending the hospital for your treatment.

How should I look after myself afterwards?

For the first six hours after each treatment you should take special precautions when you pass urine. Men should sit down the first time they pass urine to avoid splashing. Wash your hands and genital area with soap and water each time you pass urine. If any urine spills onto your skin, wash with soap and water. Do not use moisturisers. Take special care if you have any open wounds that these do not to come into contact with the drug or any contaminated urine. Drink plenty of fluids for the rest of the day following the treatment to flush any remaining drug out of your system. If you are sexually active, the male partner should use a condom during sexual activity for the first forty-eight hours after each treatment

You should take care to prevent children coming into contact with the drug or with urine contaminated with the drug.

Follow up:

A further telescopic examination of your bladder will be carried out 6-8 weeks after your course of treatment is complete, you will be notified of

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this by post in due course. You will need to send a urine sample to the hospital 1-2 weeks prior to the telescopic examination. Your nurse will provide you with a urine bottle.

Useful contact numbers:

Ward 33: Tel 024 7696 5381

If you have any questions or concerns about your diagnosis or treatment and would like to discuss them, please contact:

Sister Lorraine Taylor,
Sister Mandinika Muzondo,
Sister Marguerite Reynolds,
Sister Natalie Probert

Telephone 024 7696 5149

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format please contact 024 7696 5149 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

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