

Discharge from the Inpatient Hematology/Oncology Service

Self-care and numbers to call

UW Medicine
UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
MEDICAL CENTER

This handout gives information for you to use at home after you are discharged from the Inpatient Hematology/Oncology Service at UW Medical Center (UWMC).



*Scan with your
phone camera to
read this
document online.*

Your clinic oncologist is: _____

Your care team phone number: _____

For Appointments

To make an appointment or to ask questions about a scheduled appointment, please call your care team.

Home Infusions and Line Supplies

If you receive line supplies from a home infusion agency and have any questions about these supplies, please read the information the agency gave you.

Risk of Infection

White blood cells (WBCs) help protect your body from infection. Chemotherapy can decrease your numbers of the WBCs called *neutrophils*. This blood condition is called *neutropenia*.



UW Medical Center (UWMC)

If you have neutropenia, you are at higher risk for getting infections. To help prevent infections:

- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water, especially before eating and after using the bathroom. Or you can use a hand gel that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid crowds and people who are sick.
- Make sure your family members (including children), caregivers, and close contacts are up to date on their vaccines unless they cannot have them for health reasons.

- Some vaccines, like MMR (measles, mumps, rubella), varicella, and shingles, are live virus vaccines. It is usually safe for people in your home to get these vaccines but talk to your care team first to determine the best timing.
 - Live vaccines can sometimes shed (spread small amounts of the virus), which may be a risk for someone who has a weakened immune system. Some live vaccines pose a very small risk of spreading in your home.
 - Get your flu vaccine and ask your caregivers to get theirs, too. Avoid the nasal mist flu vaccine (FLUMIST®) while you are immunocompromised. Family members, caregivers, and close contacts should also avoid FLUMIST® unless your care team says it's okay.
- Clean items you use often with disinfectant wipes. This includes phones and computer keyboards.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, mouth, and central line, especially if your hands are not clean.
- Take good care of your teeth and gums. Use a soft toothbrush and brush and floss your teeth gently.

Central Line Care

Your central line dressing will be changed on: _____

- Flush both lumens of your tunneled central line with 10 mL saline once a day and after each use.
- Shower or bathe every day and protect your central line:
 - Cover the claves of your central line with Parafilm.
 - Cover your line with Aquaguard, Saran Wrap, Press'n Seal, or a shower sleeve.
 - If you are using a Curo cap, make sure the Parafilm covers both the Curo cap and the clave connection.
- Scan the QR codes on the left with your phone camera to watch Fred Hutch videos. These show how to flush your central line and protect it while showering.



*Scan this QR code
for a video on
"How to Flush
Your Central Line
(saline only)."*



*Scan this QR code
for a video on
"How to Protect
Your Central Line
When Showering."*

Fever

A fever is often the first sign that your body is fighting an infection. While you are on chemotherapy, a fever can be a sign of a serious health problem that needs attention right away. You may need to receive life-saving treatment.

Closely monitor your temperature (preferably by mouth) while you are on chemotherapy. To do this, take your temperature:

- 2 times a day, in the morning and at night
- Any time you feel hot or cold or have shaking or chills.

Call a member of your care team or after-hours support right away if you experience:

- Temperature taken by mouth at or above 100.4° F (38° C)
- Temperature taken under the arm at or above 99.5° F (37.5° C)
- Chills or shaking, even if your temperature is normal

If you have a fever:

- You **must** call your care team. If you have a fever at night, do not wait until morning to call.
- Your care team may tell you to go to an Emergency Room (ER). Follow their instructions. If you have had chemotherapy recently, tell the nurse who greets you at the ER.
- Talk with your provider before taking any fever-reducing medications (such as acetaminophen or Tylenol, ibuprofen, or Advil).

Other Health Concerns

For more details about symptoms and home care, please read the “**Fred Hutch Guide to Your Care**” manual. You can ask your care team for a copy or read it online at FredHutch.org/guide-to-your-care. You can also scan the QR code shown on the left using your phone camera.



Scan this QR to read the “Fred Hutch Guide to Your Care” manual.

When to Get Help

Call 911 for a life-threatening emergency, including:

- Severe trouble breathing
- Bleeding that you cannot control
- New severe pain or chest pain
- Seizures or loss of consciousness
- New confusion or unexplained drowsiness
- Signs of stroke: face drooping, arm weakness, speech difficulty

Call the Oncology Clinic (do NOT send a MyChart message) if you have:

- Fever and/or chills
- Temperature taken by mouth at or above 100.4° F (38° C)
- Temperature taken under the arm at or above 99.5° F (37.5° C)
 - Talk with your provider before taking any fever-reducing medications (such as acetaminophen or Tylenol, ibuprofen or Advil).
- New or worsening shortness of breath
- Signs or symptoms of infection (new or increased redness, pain, swelling)
- Uncontrolled nausea, vomiting, constipation, or diarrhea
- Pain that is new or getting worse
- Pain that is not controlled by medication
- Signs of bleeding, like bruising, nosebleeds, or blood in stool (poop) or urine (pee)
- Vision loss or vision changes
- Dizziness, balance changes, or falls with or without injury
- Concerns that cannot wait until your follow-up visit

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

- If you are having a life-threatening emergency, call 911.
- If you have urgent questions or concerns, call your care team.

Business Hours:

- Call your care team, or call **206.606.1000**
- My care team's number is: _____

After Hours:

- Call your care team and press 0, or call **206.606.1000**
- **After hours urgent calls will be routed to the UWMC Paging Operator. In this case, ask for the Hematology Oncology fellow to be paged.**

For all other questions or concerns, contact your care team via MyChart or phone.