

A Guide to



Being at Home after Chemotherapy

Patient Information

Chemotherapy

While you are having chemotherapy and for about 7 days after its completion, your bodily fluids will contain a small amount of chemotherapy. It is safer to avoid direct contact with it as it can be an irritant to skin, eyes etc. Here are some tips to protect you and those around you when you go home. Not all recommendations will apply to you.

Soiled bedding and clothes

Wear gloves to handle soiled items and carry them to the washing machine in a plastic bag. Wash items on the hottest wash permitted, twice and then put the machine through another wash, empty. If an item is too heavily soiled to wash, put it in a cytotoxic bin (the hospital can provide you with one). If the item is too big, put it into two refuse sacks and tie. Return it to the hospital ward or clinic that you attend for disposal. In the meantime keep the bags away from children and pets.



Using the toilet

Flush the toilet with the lid down, twice, allowing the cistern to fill in between.

Gentlemen, if you sit to pass water it will reduce splashes.

If you have to pour the contents of urinals and bedpans into the toilet, do so carefully. Wash any equipment with hot soapy water. Catheter and stoma bags and lightly soiled incontinence pads can be put into a tied plastic bag and thrown away.



Always wear gloves when handling the above.

In the sun

Your skin will be more sensitive to the sun following chemotherapy, so use at least SPF 30 and a wide brimmed hat. Do this for at least 2 years after treatment has finished.



Splashes and spillages

To clean up spills and splashes (ie around the toilet or if you are sick etc) use protective gloves. Strong household gloves are fine and can be washed in hot soapy water and re-used, but don't use them for any other purpose. Wash surfaces with hot soapy water and dispose of the cloths in a tied plastic bag in the household waste.



Contraception

Whether it is you or your partner who has had chemotherapy, for a few months after treatment, use a condom for any sexual contact. Pregnancy should be avoided whilst on chemotherapy, so speak to your doctor about contraception.



If you have been given a cytotoxic waste bin or have unused medicines at home, return them to the hospital when they are no longer needed. If you have any other questions please speak to a member of staff.

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