

Information on Anti-Cancer Medications

Anti-cancer medicines are classified as hazardous substances and can be in your body fluids for up to 7 days after each treatment cycle or longer if you have been taking your medication on a daily basis. You should be careful during this time. Your pharmacist should advise if these precautions are necessary specific to the medicine you are taking.

What are the best safety precautions?



Cleaning up spills of body fluid

- Use disposable cloths
- Wash down any surfaces with soapy water
- Put the used cloths in a plastic bag and tie it up
- Put this inside another plastic bag and tie that up (double-bagging)
- Throw the bags in the bin



Getting rid of other body fluids

- 'Double Bag' any incontinence pads, nappies, catheter bags or stoma bags, before throwing them away



Washing clothing or bedding with body fluids on

- Wash any clothing or bedding straight away
- Wash them separately on a long washing machine cycle



Vomiting

- Use a plastic bowl, or a plastic bag with no holes (and 'double bag')
- If you use a bowl, wash it out with soap and water afterwards. Don't use it for anything else. Throw it out.

Wear gloves to clean up body fluids. Always wash your hands afterwards.

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Common Questions



Will I get side effects?

- Side effects from anti-cancer medicines vary from medicine to medicine and from person to person
- Staff may not be able to predict what side effects you may have, but they can give you an idea of what to watch out for.
- Ask your doctor or nurse if there are any side effects you should urgently report to them if they occur.
- Your doctor may prescribe other medicines to help with anti-cancer side-effects.



Will I still need my doctor?

- Even though you will take your cancer treatment at home, you will still need to see your healthcare team as they will watch for changes in the cancer and see how you are doing in your cancer treatment plan.
- You should be given printed information about your anti-cancer medication, including information about:
 - How to recognise the possible side effects of the medication
 - How to prevent or manage these side effects at home
 - When to contact your treating team or attend hospital



Can I still take other medicines?

- It is important to tell your doctor about any medicines you are taking before starting your cancer treatment
- Don't stop or start any medication without talking to your doctor or pharmacist first

Remember: Talk to your doctor or nurse if you have any questions about your treatment