

Patient Guide



Precautions for patients receiving oncology treatments

This guide contains general information as well as certain precautions to take when receiving chemotherapy treatments.

These precautions are to prevent your family members, friends and even your pet from **coming into contact with residue from chemotherapy drugs**.

Note that the mere physical presence of a person undergoing chemotherapy does not pose any danger.

Precautions to take at home

Storing hazardous medications

- All hazardous medications must be kept **out of reach of children and animals**.
- Do not keep the medication near **food** (e.g., pantry) or in a **humid** environment (e.g., bathroom).

Safely handling hazardous medications

- **Before and after handling**, you must wash your hands with soap and water.

Intravenous medication

- If you have a continuous chemotherapy drip at home, we strongly recommend that you **cover your mattress with a plastic protector** to avoid any risk of contamination (e.g., accidental spillage).
- Your caregiver must use **disposable gloves** when handling the drip pump or hazardous medication bag. The disposable gloves must then be placed in a plastic bag that is sealed and thrown away immediately.
- While your continuous chemotherapy drip is in progress, **always have beside you the spill kit** that was given to you by the nurse at your first treatment as well as your information booklet about the use of drips at home, if applicable.

Oral medication

If you are receiving oral chemotherapy, we strongly recommend that you watch the following explanatory videos (in French):

- **Regularly attending treatments:** <https://vimeo.com/266137603>
- **Managing side effects:**
<https://vimeo.com/265796661>
- **Safe handling and management of waste:**
<https://vimeo.com/266143952>
- **Professionals to support you:**
<https://vimeo.com/265797024>

Source: Groupe d'étude en oncologie du Québec (GEOQ)

<https://www.geoq.info/>



Laundry

- Bedding and clothes that are **not visibly soiled** can be washed with the regular laundry.
- Bedding and clothes that **are visibly soiled** (e.g., urine, vomit or profuse sweat) should be washed separately and as quickly as possible.
 - ◇ You must **wear gloves and wash your hands** after handling these items.
 - ◇ A **double wash in hot water** can be done if some linens are very soiled. If you cannot wash them immediately, place them in a well-sealed plastic bag.
 - ◇ Soiled linens **must never be shaken**, since this could release contaminated particles.

Managing bodily fluids 96 h after chemotherapy

The medications you receive are present **in your body for several days** after the treatment. During this time, all the fluids and secretions you produce **contain traces of medications** (e.g., in vomit, urine, stools, vaginal secretions and sperm).

- Always **wash your hands** with soap and water after handling bodily fluids.
- Important instructions:
 - ◇ **Urinate while sitting** (including men).
 - ◇ Close the toilet lid and flush **twice after using the toilet**.
 - ◇ **On a daily basis**, wipe the toilet bowl, the lid and the floor around the toilet with regular cleaning products. The rags must not be used on other surfaces.
- Family members **should not use the same toilet as you**, if possible.
- You **must wear a pair of disposable gloves** when handling urine and stools or soiled clothes and linens.
- If you **suffer from incontinence**:
 - ◇ Throw your incontinence underwear into a regular **garbage bag that has been doubled** and close it. After 96 hours, it can be thrown into a regular garbage bin.
 - ◇ Pay close attention to your skin: after washing the area around your genitals and anus with soap and water, **apply a protective cream**.