

Preparing Your Cancer Medicine

Cancer medicine is used to help treat cancer. If you are getting this medicine intravenously (IV), this handout explains why it takes time to get your medicine ready after you arrive for your appointment or are admitted to the hospital.

Why is my cancer medicine not made until I arrive for my treatment?

Before your treatment can be given, a number of safety checks will be done by the nurse and the pharmacist. When you arrive for your appointment or after admission to the hospital, **the healthcare team** will:

- Review the treatment plan ordered by your doctor
- Do a health exam and talk with you about any concerns you may have about treatment
- Review your labs to make sure it is okay for you to have your treatment
- Check if you need any medicines to help with the side effects that may be caused by the treatment

What will happen before I receive my treatment?

After the checks are complete, the healthcare team will let **the pharmacist** know to prepare your treatment. While the Pharmacy is making your cancer medicine, you may receive:

- Medicine to prevent nausea and vomiting
- Medicines to prevent an allergic reaction
- IV fluids

This handout is for informational purposes only. Talk with your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.

How is my cancer medicine made?

- Two pharmacists will review your treatment plan to make sure everything is correct and complete.
- The order will be sent to the pharmacy technician who will make your cancer medicine.
- Orders for these therapies are processed in the order they are received. Your wait time will depend on the number of orders ahead of yours.
- The pharmacy technician will make your medicine in a special room to keep it germ free. Each dose is carefully made for your specific treatment.
- It can take up to 60 minutes, or more to make one dose. Many times, a person will receive more than one medicine and each one must be prepared in this way.
- When your medicine has been made, two pharmacists will check to make sure it was made exactly as ordered.
- When your medicine passes all the pharmacy safety checks, the pharmacist will either deliver it to the nurse or tell the nurse it is ready for pick up.

What happens after my cancer medicine is prepared?

After your cancer medicine is prepared the nurse will do final safety checks before your dose is given.

- Two nurses will check your medicine using medicine safety guidelines.
- After all safety checks are done, the nurse will start your treatment.

The process may seem slow, but there are many steps involved. These steps are taken to make sure your cancer medicine is ordered, prepared and given in the safest way possible.