

Discharge Instructions and Immune Precautions: Autologous Blood and Marrow Stem Cell Transplant

General Guidelines

Here are special instructions on how to care for yourself after your blood and marrow transplant (BMT). Your immune system is weak after your BMT and you are at higher risk for infection. Use these precautions once you leave the hospital and for the next 2 months after your BMT, unless told otherwise by your doctor. If you live more than 1 hour away, you may need to stay in the local area for follow-up care after your BMT. Your doctor or nurse will tell you when you can stop following these precautions.

Skin Care and Hygiene

- Keep your skin clean. Take a shower each day to help reduce the risk of infection.
- Wash your hands often to keep them clean. It is important to wash your hands:
 - ▶ After you use the bathroom
 - ▶ After you touch trash
 - ▶ Before and after you eat
- Ask all caregivers and visitors to wash their hands when they are with you.
- Use a hypoallergenic lotion on your hands 2 times each day and as needed on other parts of your body.
- Use hypoallergenic sunscreen with a SPF of 30 or higher.
- Stay away from direct sunlight.

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

- Cover your head with a wig, scarf or cap when you are outside.
- Check with your nurse or doctor before you have sexual intercourse.
- Check with your nurse or doctor before you use make-up, nail polish, hair treatments (including color, highlights and perms) contact lenses, tampons and douches.
- Use an electric razor to shave, if needed.

Pets and Animals

- **Do not** let animals near your face.
- Wash your hands after you touch an animal.
- **Do not** touch pet urine and feces.
- **Do not** clean litter boxes, cages, or aquariums.

Environmental

- Your caregiver should keep your home as clean as possible. Floors, carpets, furniture, counter tops and bathrooms should be cleaned often.
- Stay away from areas where you can see dust and dirt in the air.
- **Do not** use tobacco products such as cigarettes, cigars, pipes and chew. Stay away from second hand smoke.
- **Do not** do yard work such as gardening, mowing the lawn, or raking leaves.
- **Do not** touch cut flowers or potted plants.
- **Do not** work on cars or machinery.
- Stay away from chemicals and fumes from fuel or gasoline. **Do not** pump gas into your car.
- Stay away from fuel oil, paints, pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers.
- Stay away from remodeling, painting or construction where you live.
- **Do not** use of portable humidifiers or vaporizers.
- Put on a duck-bill (respirator) mask before you exit your car when you arrive at the hospital. You may remove the mask after you are taken to a clinic room. Wear this mask in construction areas, crowds of people or outdoors when it is windy. Always wear the mask if you are around someone who is sick.

Nutrition

- Unless your doctor tells you otherwise, drink 8 to 10 cups of non-caffeinated fluid each day to stay hydrated.
- City water is okay to drink. If you have well water you need to continue to drink bottled water, until your doctor tells you it is okay to drink well water.
- When you leave the hospital, you will be on a **regular diet**. This means you no longer need to follow the immunocompromised (low bacteria) diet you were on while in the hospital.
- **Follow these food safety guidelines when you cook or eat.** It is important to stay away from high-risk foods until your immune system is back to normal.
 - ▶ **Do not** eat raw or undercooked meats, seafood, and eggs.
 - ▶ **Do not** eat sushi.
 - ▶ **Do not** eat eggs that are not fully cooked, including soft-boiled or “over easy” eggs.
 - ▶ **Do not** eat unwashed fruits and vegetables.
 - ▶ **Do not** eat or drink unpasteurized sources of dairy, juice or honey.
 - ▶ Stay away from salad bar, buffets and bulk food bins.

If your doctor has you on a restricted diet for another medical condition, like diabetes or dialysis, follow those guidelines.

Recreation and Work

- Increase your activity slowly.
- Begin light exercise such as walking.
- Get plenty of rest and take breaks between activities.
- You will need someone else to drive you until your doctor says it is okay for you to drive a car.
- Go to public places such as stores, malls, movies, and restaurants during less crowded times.
- Tell your employer or school that you may be away for several months. Check with your doctor or nurse to find out when you may return to work or school.
- **Do not** ride bicycles or motorcycles.

Contact with Family, Children, and Friends

- Stay away from people who have colds, flu, or contagious illness such as measles, chicken pox, herpes, viruses, colds, pink eye, coughs, and sore throat.

Medicines, Drugs, and Alcohol

- Take your medicines as ordered by your doctor. Tell your doctor or nurse if you are unable to take your medicines due to nausea or vomiting.
- **Do not** take medicines that are not ordered by your doctor, including any over-the-counter medicines or herbal remedies. Examples: aspirin, laxatives, herbals or supplements.
- Bring all your medicine containers or bottles to your first clinic visit.
- Bring all the medicines you may need for the entire day to each clinic visit. You may be at the clinic for 2 to 8 hours based on what tests and treatment you need that day.
- Ask your doctor or nurse if you have any questions about any of your medicines and tell them about any of your side effects.
- **Do not** drink any alcoholic beverages such as wine, beer or mixed drinks.