

# Chemotherapy at Home: Staying Safe if Your Medicine Spills

## Chemotherapy at Home

Your health care provider has ordered chemotherapy for you. During chemotherapy, medicine that fights cancer is given through an IV line in your hand, arm or chest area.

Chemotherapy is usually given in the hospital. However, it is possible for some chemotherapy to be given in the comfort of your own home.

The length of time you will need to do chemotherapy will depend on how well your body responds to the medicine. Your health care provider will monitor your progress through regular blood tests and make changes to your medicine, if needed.

## What to Expect

A nurse will hook up your pump with your medicine at the clinic. You will go home and after 2 days, have it unhooked one of the following ways:

- returning to the clinic
- having a nurse come to your home.  
(This is rare.)

Call your clinic if you have questions about how to give your chemotherapy at home.

## Whom To Call With Questions

A member of your health care team is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Call your clinic if you have questions about:

- nurse visits
- your medicines
- side effects you are having
- the delivery of your medicines, chemo spill kit and supplies.

## Your Clinic

Clinic name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

## What to Do if Your Medicine Spills

The chart on the back of this fact sheet gives instructions for how to clean up each type of medicine spill. **It is important that you (and anyone helping you) always wear gloves when cleaning up a spill.**

Type of spill	How to clean
<b>Any type of spill</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Turn off pump. (See the box below.)</li> <li>■ Use your chemotherapy spill kit to clean up the spill. (See instructions in next section.)</li> <li>■ Put the pump in a zip-close bag.</li> <li>■ Call your clinic right away. If your clinic is closed, go to the nearest hospital Emergency Department (ED).</li> </ul>
<b>Hard surface</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Use paper towels to soak up the medicine. Put the paper towels in a double-lined bag.</li> <li>■ Use warm, soapy water with paper towels to clean the area <b>3 times</b>. Put the paper towels in the bag. Tie the top.</li> </ul>
<b>Fabric (clothing, linens)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Put the fabric in the washing machine separately from other items.</li> <li>■ Wash with warm (not hot) water and detergent.</li> <li>■ Dry, as desired.</li> </ul>
<b>Skin</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Wash the area of your skin with warm, soapy water for 5 minutes.</li> <li>■ Pat dry with a clean towel.</li> </ul>
<b>Eyes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Flush your eyes with cold water for 5 minutes.</li> <li>■ Have someone drive you to the nearest hospital Emergency Department (ED) right away.</li> </ul>

## How to Use Your Spill Kit

You will receive a spill kit from your clinic. Here are instructions to follow if a spill occurs.

- Open the spill kit. Remove the gloves from the kit and put on both pairs (one over the other).
- If the spill is larger than the size of a nickel, put on the gown, goggles and mask. Make sure to close the gown in the back.
- Using the towels provided in the kit, soak up the medicine. Work from the outside to the middle of the spill to keep it contained.
- Place the towels in the plastic bag.
- Wash the area with warm, soapy water. Then rinse with clean water. Repeat 3 times.  
**Important: Do not** use spot removers or fabric cleaners. These may contain chemicals that can have a reaction with the medicine.
- Take off the gown, goggles and mask. Put them in the plastic bag with the towels.
- Place all items you used (gloves, plastic bag with items) in a second large plastic bag. Use a pen or marker that will not run if the ink gets wet to label it "Hazardous Waste."
- Wash your hands well with warm, soapy water. Pat dry with a clean towel.
- Call your clinic right away for more instructions.

### 4 Steps to Turn off the Pump



1. Press the button on the lower left to stop the pump.
2. Press the button on the upper right to choose "yes."



3. Press the button on the right side.
4. Press the button on the upper right (step 2) to choose "yes."