

# Safety at Home After a Chemotherapy Treatment

## Chemotherapy Medicine

The medicines you receive to fight cancer are toxic substances. They destroy cancer cells, but the medicines can also affect normal cells exposed to them.

The medicines are present in your body waste (urine, stool, vomit and blood) for 2 days after treatment.

There are some steps you can take at home for those 2 days to prevent anyone from coming in contact with the medicines.

## Using a Bathroom

- You may use a bathroom as usual.
- For 48 hours after a chemotherapy treatment, close the lid and flush twice each time you use the toilet.
- Wash your hands well with soap and water each time after using the toilet.
- If you use any items (such as a bedpan, urinal or emesis basin) to hold body wastes:
  - Wear disposable gloves when handling the items.
  - Seal the gloves into two plastic bags. Dispose of the bag with your regular trash.
  - Wash your hands and the items well with soap and water.

- If you use products for incontinence (not able to control your bladder or bowel):
  - Wear disposable gloves when handling used products.
  - Seal the gloves and used products into two plastic bags. Dispose of the bag with your regular trash.
- Wash your skin if any urine or stool gets on it.
- Wash your hands well.

## Cleaning Up a Body Waste Spill

If urine, stool, vomit or blood spills:

- Wear gloves and use dry paper towels or cloth to clean up the spill.
- Wash the area with soap and water and clean paper towels or cloth.
- Seal the gloves and cleanup materials into two plastic bags. Dispose of the bag with your regular trash.
- Wash your hands well.

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## **Washing Materials that Come in Contact with Body Waste**

Buy disposable gloves and plastic bags that can be sealed. Use gloves only once. Do not use them if they are torn or have a hole in them.

If clothes or bed linens become soiled with body waste:

- Avoid touching the soiled area with your bare hands.
- Wear disposable gloves to put the soiled materials into a washing machine. Do not add any non-soiled items to the load.
- Wash the materials in hot water.
- If you can't launder the items right away, put them into a sealed plastic bag until you can wash them.
- Seal the gloves into two plastic bags. Dispose of the bag with your regular trash.
- Wash your hands well.

## **Special Precaution if You Are Pregnant**

Avoid direct contact with contaminated waste.