

INFORMATION SHEET BCG

Introduction

This leaflet is designed to answer some of the questions you may have about your illness and its treatment. It is important to remember that your relationship with your doctor is the foundation of your treatment. This leaflet is meant to help you understand urinary bladder cancer; it does not and should not take the place of discussions between you and your doctor.

Your doctor has recommended a course of BCG to treat your bladder cancer.

Please contact the rooms on 82231472 (9am to 5pm) to speak to a nurse if you have any concerns.

In case of an emergency the doctor's after hours number is in the telephone book.

Treatment of Bladder Cancer with BCG

BCG is a preparation of a particular type of bacteria which has been weakened so that it can be used to help fight against bladder cancer. The exact way BCG works is unknown. It has been suggested that it promotes a local inflammatory reaction in the bladder and that it also stimulates the immune system, which is the body's defence against disease.

BCG Treatment and Results

BCG is given once a week for 6 weeks. In some cases it may be necessary to have additional treatment, to get a better effect. This is only after consultation with your doctor, following repeat cystoscopy 6-8 weeks after completion of the treatment.

Before BCG Treatment

- Please limit fluid intake for 4 hours and if possible avoid taking water tablets (diuretics) prior to treatment.
- Inform your doctor if you have felt feverish, unusually tired, if you have had any chills or seen blood in your urine since the last treatment.
- The genital area will be cleaned with a sterile solution and draped with a sterile sheet.
- A doctor or nurse will catheterise (insert a small flexible tube through your urethra) the bladder to remove residual urine.

During BCG Treatment

The BCG suspension is introduced into the bladder by means of the catheter. The treatment takes a few minutes, after which (in most cases) the catheter is removed and you may go home.

BCG should be held in the bladder for 2 hours. During the first 15 minutes you should lie on your back. It is recommended that you roll on 4 sides (back, left side, stomach and right side) for 15 minute intervals during the 2 hour period.

After BCG Treatment

After 2 hours, you should drink plenty of fluids, especially water, to flush the bladder.

Each time you empty your bladder during the first 6 hours after treatment the following procedure should be followed:

1. Empty your bladder by sitting down on a toilet.
2. Disinfect the urine in the toilet with an equal volume of undiluted household bleach and allow to stand for 15 minutes before flushing toilet.

Check with your doctor if:

1. There is a significant and persistent increase in existing urinary symptoms (such as frequency of emptying your bladder or painful urination).
2. Any of the following symptoms develop:

More Common

- Blood in the urine for more than 24 hours
- Painful or frequent urination lasting more than 24 hours
- Fever and chills
- Nausea/vomiting

Rare

- Cough
- Skin rash
- High or persistent fever
- Joint pains
- Jaundice (yellow skin)

Record whether you noticed any side effect(s) at the end of this leaflet and discuss with your doctor before each treatment.

Date

Symptoms

After treatment, your doctor will want you to come in for checkups periodically to monitor your progress. During these visits be sure to discuss with your doctor **anything** that you are unsure about, such as:

- Symptoms to expect following treatment
- When you can get back to your normal routines
- What other activities are okay
- What foods you may eat or should avoid
- Whether or not you should climb stairs
- Any other concerns that you may have

IF YOU SMOKE, IT IS IMPORTANT FOR YOU TO QUIT. YOUR DOCTOR MAY OFFER SUGGESTIONS TO HELP YOU.

While you are healing, it is important to listen to your body and stop any activity when you feel tired.

Remember too, that there is no such thing as a “*silly question*” when it comes to your health. Your doctor will be more than happy to answer any questions you have about your condition, treatment and recovery.

SIDE EFFECTS
