

Safe Handling of Body Waste at Home

This handout talks about how to safely handle body waste (bowel movements, urine, vomit, body fluids, or drainage) for people receiving cancer treatment. These guidelines are for you and your family members to follow **during and for 48 hours after** your cancer treatment.

Body Waste

Cancer medicines may be released in body waste. You and your family members should follow these guidelines when touching toilets, commodes, bedpans, vomit pans, urinals and ostomy bags, or any other body waste containers:

- Wear disposable gloves when emptying or cleaning toilets, body waste containers or changing diapers (adult Depends®). You can buy these gloves at any drug store. Remove and throw away the gloves and then wash your hands.
- Empty containers of body waste into the toilet. Empty the contents close to the water to avoid splashing.
- Flush the toilet twice with the lid down after use. When a lid is not present, cover the open toilet with a plastic-backed pad to prevent splashing or release of aerosols during flushing.
- Clean the toilet bowl in the usual manner. Clean up splashes with detergent and water or cleansing wipes.
- Clean body waste containers after each use with soap and water. Rinse well. Ostomy bags only need to be cleaned once a day and emptied as needed.
- If you use diapers, use disposable diapers. Place them in a separate bag and dispose in trash.
 - Keep this trash away from children and pets.
- To avoid splattering urine, men and women should urinate by sitting down on the toilet.

Laundry

Clothes may become soiled by body waste. Follow these guidelines to care for soiled laundry:

- Wear disposable gloves to handle soiled laundry and place soiled laundry in the washer.
- Soiled laundry should be washed right away. If it can't be washed right away, put it in a plastic bag or pillow case. Wash it as soon as possible. Wash soiled laundry twice, separately from household items. Use normal detergent and hot or warm water.
- Discard disposable diapers in plastic bags to prevent leakage.
- Remove and throw away the gloves and then wash your hands.

Sexual Intimacy

Cancer medicines may be released in body fluids (such as semen or vaginal secretions) that are present during sexual activities. You and your partner must use condoms (or barrier) for oral sex and intercourse.

If you are having problems during business hours (8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.), please call (732) 235-2465 and the operator will direct your call. If it is after business hours, on a holiday or weekend, please call the same number and our answering service will assist you.