

Your Guide to Intravesical Cancer Treatments

Intravesical cancer treatment is when cancer medicine is given directly into the bladder. This handout will give you information about this treatment and help you understand what to expect.

What is intravesical cancer treatment?

Intravesical cancer treatment is the delivery of the anti-cancer medicine into the bladder. This type of treatment is used for cancer that is confined to a small area on the surface of the bladder. This type of treatment gives a higher dose of medicine where it is most needed, and there are fewer side effects to the rest of the body. Bacillus Calmette-Guerin (BCG), interferon, and chemotherapy are all medicines that may be used in this type of treatment.

What should you do before each treatment?

Do not drink fluids for four hours before your scheduled appointment.

Tell your doctor or nurse if you:

- Have a fever or feel feverish
- Feel very tired
- Have chills
- Are urinating blood

How is the treatment given?

A specially trained nurse will give you the treatment. Your nurse will be dressed in protective equipment such as gowns, gloves, and goggles.

A small, flexible tube, called a catheter, will be put into your bladder through your urethra. The medicine will run through the tube into your bladder. This takes a few minutes. This medicine usually remains in your bladder for two hours. Your nurse will tell you how long the catheter will remain in place and when you can urinate. You will need to be in bed during the entire procedure.

Historically, the patient has been instructed to lie down and reposition every 15 minutes from left side to right side, then on back to dislodge air bubbles from the catheter and to ensure that the medication comes in contact with all of the areas of the bladder. However, according to the American Urological Association, there is no evidence to support this practice.

What should you do after your treatment?

Because the medicine was placed in your bladder, it will come out of your body when you urinate. It is important to follow the instructions below for your safety and the safety of everyone around you.

For all treatments (BCG, interferon, and chemotherapy):

- Beginning one hour after receiving the intravesical medicine, start drinking plenty of fluids (at least six 8-ounce glasses)
- After urinating, put the lid down and flush twice.

- Wash your hands for 15 seconds with soap and water after each time you urinate or you have a bowel movement.
- If urine gets on any clothing, sheets, or towels, wash it twice. Place it directly into the washing machine and wash as soon as possible in warm soapy water, separate from other laundry.
- Talk to your doctor or nurse about sexual activity restrictions.
- No one should come in contact with your urine, especially children and pregnant or nursing mothers.
- Please see the attached **Safe Handling of Body Waste at Home** document for more information.

For treatments which include BCG:

- 6 hours after each treatment:
 - Sit down on the toilet when urinating to avoid splattering urine.
 - Clean your genital area with soap and water after urinating.
 - Before you flush, pour one cup of bleach (Clorox[®] or generic) all around the inner walls of the toilet bowl and one cup of bleach into the water in the toilet.
 - **Do not flush immediately!** Put the lid down, and allow urine to stay in the toilet with the bleach for 15 minutes.
 - After 15 minutes of letting urine and bleach remain in the toilet, flush twice.

What are the possible side effects of intravesical treatment?

This type of treatment may cause the bladder to become irritated. Although not everyone has side effects with this treatment, some of the following may happen up to 48 hours after treatment:

- A sudden strong urge to urinate
- Need to urinate more often than usual
- Painful urination
- Some blood in the urine

When should you call your healthcare team?

If you experience any of the following side effects, call your healthcare team:

- Flu-like symptoms
- Fever of 100.5 °F or greater
- New or increased fatigue
- Pain in your joints
- Skin rash
- Coughing

If you are in need of immediate assistance, please call 732-235-2465 and select the option that best meets your needs.

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.

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