



CHEMOTHERAPY & *You*

Thank you for choosing to have your cancer treatment at St. Claire HealthCare. We would like to welcome you, your family, and friends. St. Claire HealthCare's oncology/hematology doctors will provide the best cancer treatment plan based upon your individual needs. Our team of oncology nurses will navigate you through your journey and deliver exceptional care in a positive, comfortable, and safe environment.

PREPARING FOR YOUR FIRST TREATMENT

- Your first day of chemotherapy is usually the best day to bring someone special with you as your journey begins.
- Have someone drive you until you know the effects of your treatment.
- Eat a light breakfast.
- Choose comfortable loose clothing.
- Bring your home medications with you.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- When you arrive to the oncology suite you will be greeted by a team member that will help you get settled in. The infusion room has lots of reclining chairs with TV and free Wi-Fi for your entertainment.
- The Registered Nurse (RN) will explain your plan of care for the day and answer any questions you may have. Your RN will take your vital signs, obtain a blood sample, and ask personal questions about your health history.
- Before we begin your chemotherapy we will give you pre-medications which may include steroids and anti-nausea medications. These help to alleviate any side effects from chemotherapy. Nausea usually doesn't occur during your chemotherapy infusion but may after. If we think this may be the case we will give you a prescription for nausea medications to take at home.
- Chemotherapy may be given through an IV. The infusion is not uncomfortable or painful. If you feel anything different during your infusion, tell your nurse right away.
- Your RN will monitor you throughout your stay. Once your infusion is complete, normal saline will rinse your vein to ensure your veins are cleared of chemotherapy.
- Finally, your IV may be removed and you will be given written discharge instructions, any follow-up appointments, and phone numbers of who you can contact for questions or concerns after chemotherapy.
- Not all patients will have side effects. The most important thing to remember is to continue to talk to your doctor or nurse about your concerns and remember to continue follow up care with your primary care physician.
- Your doctor will give you instructions for medications to take at home.

RESOURCES

- If you have any questions, you can reach St. Claire HealthCare's Oncology Department at 606.780.5557 or the Oncology Patient Navigator at 606.780.5559.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **What should I bring with me?** A water bottle, mints, lip balm, favorite blanket, books or puzzles, music player, or electronic device.
- **Will I get sick?** It is normal to be worried about side effects. You may experience nausea later that night or by the third day after your chemotherapy.
- **Will I lose my hair?** This depends on the chemotherapy drug. The nurse will go over the side effects with you.
- **Can my children and/or family come with me?** It is not recommended to bring children under 18 or pregnant women with you during your chemotherapy. But a caregiver is welcome to join you.
- **How long will it take?** Plan to spend the entire day in the chemotherapy infusion room.
- **Can I take my home medications, herbals, or over the counter medications?** Take only medications that are approved by your nurse or doctor because some products can change how chemotherapy works.
- **How will I know my chemotherapy is working?** Your doctor will do medical tests such as blood tests, X-rays, etc. Keep in mind that side effects doesn't mean it is or is not working.
- **Can I work during chemotherapy?** Many people can work during chemotherapy. You may have to adjust your schedule to meet your needs.
- **Does my insurance pay for chemotherapy?** This depends on a lot of factors. Talk to your health care team to learn more.

RESOURCES FOR CANCER PATIENTS

If you feel that any of the below services would benefit you please let a member of your care team know!

PATIENT NAVIGATOR

Patient Navigators provide assistance from diagnosis to recovery. They help set up appointments, medical tests, and provide support to the patient and family. They often make calls to communicate with you and work with you to assist with transportation or other social support needs.

AROMATHERAPY

Aromatherapy is the use of fragrant essential oils, distilled from plants to alter mood or improve symptoms such as stress or nausea. If you would like to utilize aromatherapy during your infusion we offer a wide variety of essential oils targeted to address specific symptoms.

DIETARY

Dietitians and nutritionists are experts in the use of food and nutrition to promote health and manage disease. They can advise you on what to eat in order to lead a healthy lifestyle or achieve a specific health-related goal.

GENETIC COUNSELING

A certified genetic counselor can help you and your family understand

your inherited cancer risk. A genetic counselor explains available genetic tests and what they mean. They can also offer information about cancer screening, prevention, and treatment options and provide support.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

If everyday activities have become difficult for you, you may benefit from occupational therapy. Occupational therapy is designed to improve your functional independence and help you take part in the things you want and need to do.

PALLIATIVE

The Palliative Medicine program is a medical service focusing on relieving suffering and improving quality of life for anyone dealing with an illness. This program is helpful for those still seeking curative treatment, who need support for management of symptoms.

PHYSICAL THERAPY

Physical therapists examine, evaluate, and treat patients whose conditions limit their ability to move and function in daily life. Physical therapy can

help you reduce pain or symptoms and avoid the long-term use of prescription medications and their side effects.

SOCIAL SERVICES

Our social workers help patients understand their diagnosis and make the necessary adjustments to their lifestyle, housing, or healthcare. They can provide information on services, such as home healthcare, support groups, and financial resources to help you manage your disease.

SPIRITUAL CARE

Chaplains are here to help you, a family member or loved one in need of support. If you feel anxious or upset or need someone to talk to, our Chaplains will be happy to offer a spiritual and emotional presence during your treatment.

TOBACCO CESSATION

Quitting smoking is hard, but we can help! Our tobacco treatment counselors are trained to help you develop an individualized quit plan to address your triggers and stressors to help make it the quit that sticks.