

JAMES BUCHANAN BRADY UROLOGICAL INSTITUTE
THE JOHNS HOPKINS MEDICAL INSTITUTIONS
BALTIMORE – MARYLAND 21287-2101

Your doctor has ordered a course of treatment for your bladder cancer. This involves placing prescribed medication directly into your bladder (intravesical instillation). The following information is designed to help you understand what your treatments will be like.

Please try to arrive at your scheduled visit time. When you check in for each visit, you will be asked to provide all necessary registration and insurance information. Please contact your primary care physician before the treatment day and obtain any necessary referrals and **bring with you the necessary insurance and referral information to each visit**. If you arrive without a referral, your treatment may still be given but you may be responsible for the bill.

PATIENT PREPARATIONS

Limit your fluid intake for four hours prior to an instillation. This will allow the medication to remain concentrated in the bladder and will also allow you to hold the medication comfortably for two hours.

DAY OF TREATMENT

After registration is completed, a patient identification band will be placed on your wrist and you will be asked to provide a urine specimen. At each visit your urine will be examined and tested to see if it is safe to give your medication. Only AFTER this is done will your medication be ordered from the pharmacy. As required by our patient safety guidelines, each prepared medication is checked for accuracy by two pharmacists and two nurses. These safety measures may add time to your first visit, which can last up to two hours. Subsequent visits usually average one hour.

Your nurse will then take you into a treatment room. Although your instillation is usually scheduled on a day when your doctor is in clinic, your medication will be given by a registered nurse. On your first visit, you may be asked to sign your treatment consent forms and your nurse will review specific information about the medication your doctor has prescribed for you. This will include the range of side effects that you may experience and what to do if they occur as well as special instructions for the handling of your urine after you have received your medication. There will be ample time for you to ask your nurse questions you may have and you will receive several handouts that reinforce the information about your medication.

Finally, you will be asked to change into a hospital gown, your patient identification band will be checked, and you will be asked to verify your date of birth. These measures are done to insure accuracy as well as patient safety. Next, a sterile urinary catheter will be placed into the bladder, just long enough to deliver the medication. This instillation takes approximately fifteen minutes. Normally, you will be allowed to dress and go home. Although it is suggested that you try to hold the medication in your bladder for two hours, it is not necessary for you to remain in the Urology Clinic for that length of time.

OVER

WHAT TO DO AFTER YOUR VISIT

Try to hold the medication in your bladder for two hours after your instillation and then urinate. Holding the medication in your bladder longer than two hours is not going to make it work any better and may produce bladder irritation. Urinate sitting down to avoid splashing of the medication. Always wash your hands and your genital area well after urinating. You may use soap and water but many patients find flushable, disposable personal wipes are easier to use. They are available in stores where toilet tissue or baby care products are found. Some are safe for septic systems. For patients receiving BCG, these wipes must also remain in the toilet with the two cups of bleach for fifteen minutes before flushing. After urinating, you should begin to drink a lot of liquids to help your body flush out any remaining medication. Do this for the remainder of the day.

COURSE OF TREATMENT

Usually, bladder instillations are done once a week for six to eight consecutive weeks. Your doctor may prescribe a different course for you and if you must miss a week, tell your nurse. When your course of instillations is completed, a cystoscopy will be performed about six weeks after your last visit to determine your response to the bladder medication. We wait six weeks in order to check your response so that, when the doctor inspects your bladder, any signs of inflammation from the instillations will be gone. At the direction of your doctor, you will have your cystoscopy performed either in the Urology Clinic under local anesthetic, or in the operating room while you are asleep if biopsies must also be obtained. Further management of your bladder cancer will be discussed based on the results of the cystoscopy and/or biopsies.

WHAT IS NORMAL AND WHAT IS NOT

People respond differently to the same medication and you may experience some symptoms that others do not: try not compare yourself to others. On the day of instillation, usual symptoms may include pink urine, discomfort on urination, and frequency of urination that may last for a day or two. **Please be sure to contact your doctor if any of the following occurs: fever over 101degrees (F), pain in the bladder area, foul smelling urine, acute pain on urination, and flu-like symptoms.** You will be advised on what course of action to take. Contact your physician at the number s/he has given you or contact the Urology-resident-on-call, twenty four hours a day, at 410.955.6070.

SPECIAL NOTES

Since the medication is placed directly into your bladder and not into your bloodstream, many side effects usually associated with chemotherapy such as nausea, vomiting, and hair loss do not occur.

Influenza vaccinations should be given three days prior to starting your instillations or three weeks after you are finished. Please alert your nurse if you OR any member of your household are taking steroids. Please contact your nurse or physician if you are prescribed antibiotics by your primary care provider during your course of instillations.

Sexual activity should be postponed for forty-eight hours after each instillation to eliminate the possibility of exposing your partner to any residual medication. Many patients prefer to use a condom the entire time they are getting their instillations.

We hope this information helps to answer your questions regarding your bladder instillations. For further information, please contact your physician or the Johns Hopkins Outpatient Urology Clinic nursing staff at 410-955-3801.

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