

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Oral Chemotherapy

Once your doctor has decided to start you on an oral chemotherapy drug, your nurse will meet with you to teach you about the medicine. You will be asked to sign a consent. Please keep this information handy. You may want to refer to the consent for information such as:

- potential side effects and how to manage them.
- safe handling of the medicine.
- a medicine log or calendar to keep track of when you are taking the medicine along with any side effects you may experience.

How and where do I get my chemotherapy pills?

Bronson Cancer Center staff will order your prescription from a pharmacy based on your insurance. If your insurance allows, we will fill your prescription at the Bronson specialty pharmacy. The pharmacy may have some questions or need information from you before you get your medicine. Please make sure to return any calls from the pharmacy. You can pick up the medicine or we can deliver it to you for no additional cost. If your insurance requires another specialty pharmacy, they will call you to arrange delivery of the medicine.

What if I can't afford the medicine or I don't have insurance?

Our specialty pharmacy staff or financial navigators will try to find resources to help with the cost. We will be in contact with you to get any information that is needed.

What do I do once I get the medicine?

Do **NOT** start taking the medicine until you contact your nurse. Please call your nurse the same day you get your pills. Your nurse will give you instructions on when to start. Once we know the start date, you will be scheduled for follow-up labs and an office visit. We will check how you are doing with the medicine at this visit.

How do I use the medicine log or calendar? Why is it needed?

Our staff will review with you how to fill out the medicine log or follow the calendar. It is important to keep track of when you are taking the medicine. This helps you to remember to take the pills as prescribed. It also allows us to know if you are having any side effects. If you are having side effects that prevent you from taking your medicine, call your nurse. It is important to bring this log or calendar with you to your appointments so your nurse can review it with you. Your nurse may schedule times to meet with you and review your medicines.

What should I do if I miss a dose?

If you miss a dose of medicine, refer to your teaching sheet or call your nurse. Do **NOT** take 2 doses at one time. Write down if you miss a dose and let your nurse know.

How do I get refills when I run out?

First look at the bottle to see if there are refills available. If there are, then call the pharmacy to get more medicine. If there are no refills available, contact your nurse. Please call at least 5 business days in advance to get the medicine in a timely manner.

What if I have side effects – should I continue to take the medicine?

If you have any side effects at all, please refer to the Chemotherapy and Immunotherapy Patient Guide provided in your teaching packet on when to call and how to manage side effects. If you are still unclear or have questions call the main phone number:

- Battle Creek 269-245-8660
- Kalamazoo 269-286-7170

Calls made after-hours will be handled by the answering service. They will page the on-call doctor.

Is it ok to continue my normal sexual activity while taking this medicine?

If you are of child bearing age or have the possibility of fathering a child, it is important to use birth control while taking this medicine. This medicine can affect an unborn child. You should not breast feed while taking these drugs. It is not safe for the baby. Talk to your medical oncologist if you have any of these concerns.