BCG Therapy Intravesical Treatment for Bladder Cancer

Your doctor has recommended that you be treated with Bacillus Calmette-Guerin (BCG) Therapy. BCG is an intravesical therapy. Intravesical is when a liquid treatment is placed into the bladder through a catheter or tube.

BCG is the best treatment for your type of bladder cancer. It is a live Tuberculosis (TB) vaccine which has been weakened to reduce the risk of infection. This will help your body’s immune system to fight the cancer cells. BCG lowers the chance that cancer will return or continue to grow. This treatment is well tolerated and is safe.

BCG therapy is usually given once a week for six weeks. This treatment can also be given once a week for three weeks for maintenance therapy.

Before Your Treatment

- Do not drink anything for 4 hours before treatment.
- Empty your bladder right before the treatment.
- You will be given a form called, the Quantitative Symptom Score Sheet.
- On the day of your first treatment, you will fill in the Pre-Treatment column on the form. Your nurse will help you fill out this information.
- Bring your Quantitative Symptom Score Sheet with you to each visit. Make sure to fill it out around the same time each day. Your nurse will discuss your answers with you before your treatment.
On the Day of Your Treatment

- You will be asked to undress from the waist down and given a sheet to cover yourself.
- Your nurse will have you lie on your back on the exam table.
- A cleansing solution called Betadine will be used to lower the risk of infection from the catheter placement.
- Lidocaine gel, a numbing medicine, will be placed into your urethra to make the catheter placement more comfortable. The urethra is the tube that carries urine out of your body.
- The catheter will be placed into your urethra.
- This catheter will let the urine drain from the bladder. Once the urine is drained, BCG will be placed into your bladder through the same catheter.
- After the BCG is given, the catheter is removed. The BCG will remain in your bladder. You will need to lie flat for 15 minutes after the procedure.
- After lying flat, you will then be able to get dressed. You will need to wear a pad home to soak up any liquid that may leak out.

After Your Treatment

- **Do not** drink anything for 2 hours after your treatment.
- To keep the BCG in your bladder, do not urinate for 2 hours if possible. But, do not hold your urine for longer than 3 hours.
- Write down how long you held the medicine in your bladder on the bottom of your Quantitative Symptom Score Sheet. Your nurse will ask you for this information at each visit.
- You may return to your normal activities.

Safety Precautions

- **Use the same toilet** in your home each time you urinate.
- To avoid splashing or spraying, **sit on the toilet while you urinate**.
- **During the first 6 hours after treatment, follow these steps each time you urinate:**
  - Do not flush the toilet when you finish urinating.
Before you flush, you must first pour 1 cup of bleach into the toilet, and let it sit for 15 minutes. You should then close the lid and flush the toilet.

- Wash your hands and genital area with soap and water after each time you urinate to avoid skin irritation.
- Any clothes or linens that have urine on them should be washed on the hot cycle in a washing machine. Wash soiled laundry separately.
- If urine splashes or spills on the floor, toilet seat or other areas, clean it up with a water and bleach mixture (1/2 cup bleach and 4 cups of water).

If you are sexually active you or your partner must wear a condom:
- During your 6 weeks of treatment
- And for 1 week after your last treatment

### Side Effects

**These symptoms usually do not last longer than 3 to 5 days.** There are medicines that can help reduce side effects. Tell your doctor or nurse if you have any of the following:

- Fever
- Frequent urination
- Urgency of urination
- Blood in urine
- Burning while urinating
- Bladder spasms or pain
- Arthritic or joint pain
- Flu-like symptoms

Call your doctor right away if you have a temperature greater than 101.5 degrees Fahrenheit.