

New Diagnosis Guide

Caring for Your Child at Home

About Cancer and its Treatment

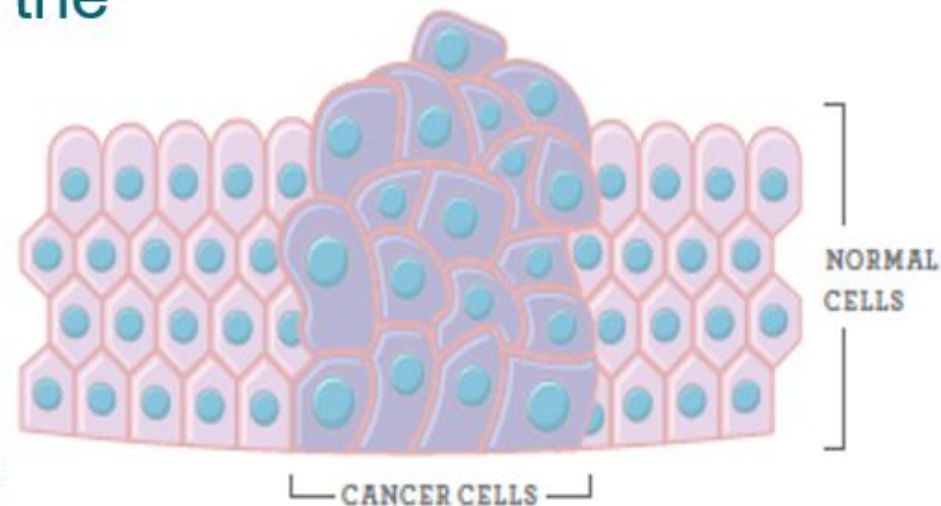
What is cancer?

Cancer in children falls into one of 3 groups:

Leukemias are cancers of the
of blood-forming cells

Lymphomas are cancers
of the immune system

Solid tumors are cancers
of the brain, bones, muscles,
organs, or other tissues in the body



How is cancer treated?

Each type of childhood cancer is treated differently.

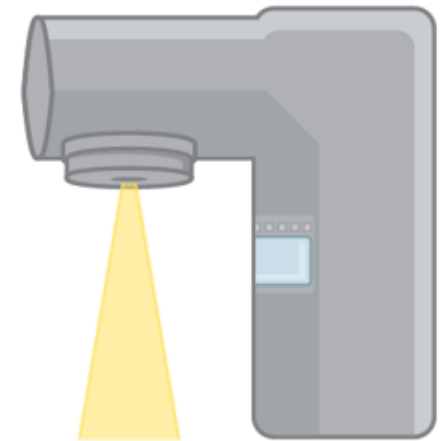
Your child's treatment may include one or a combination of the following:



**Chemotherapy
Immunotherapy**

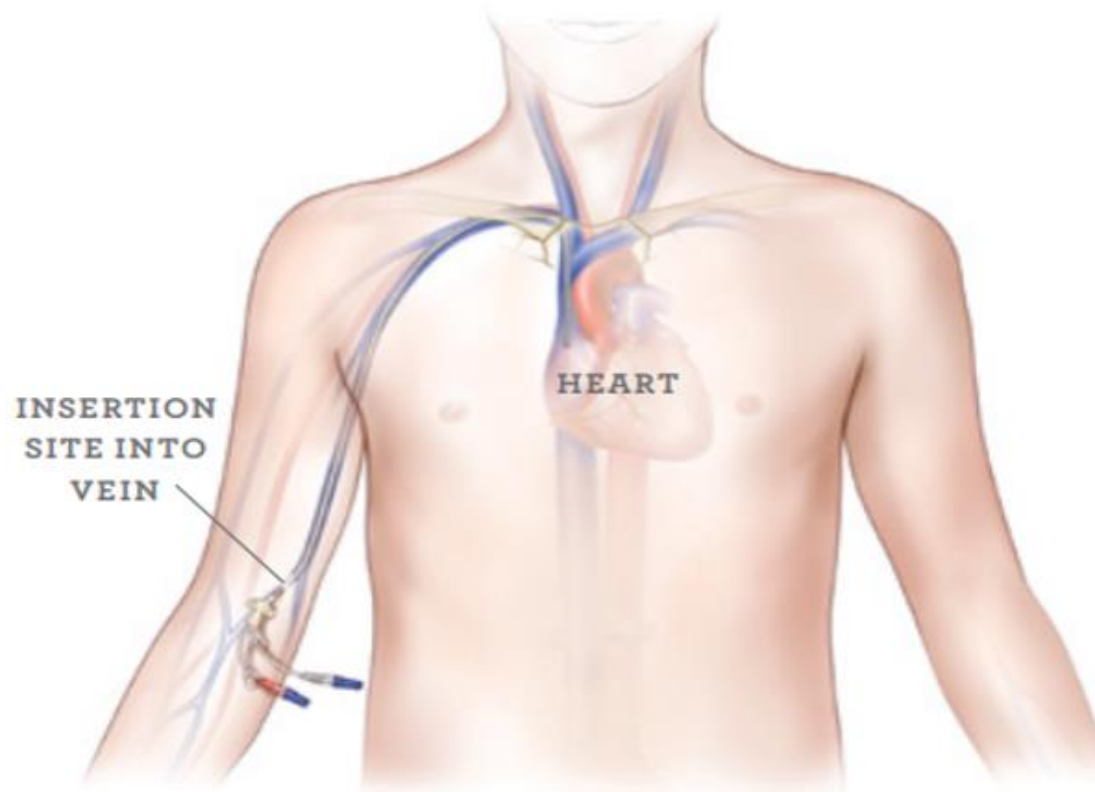


Surgery



Radiation

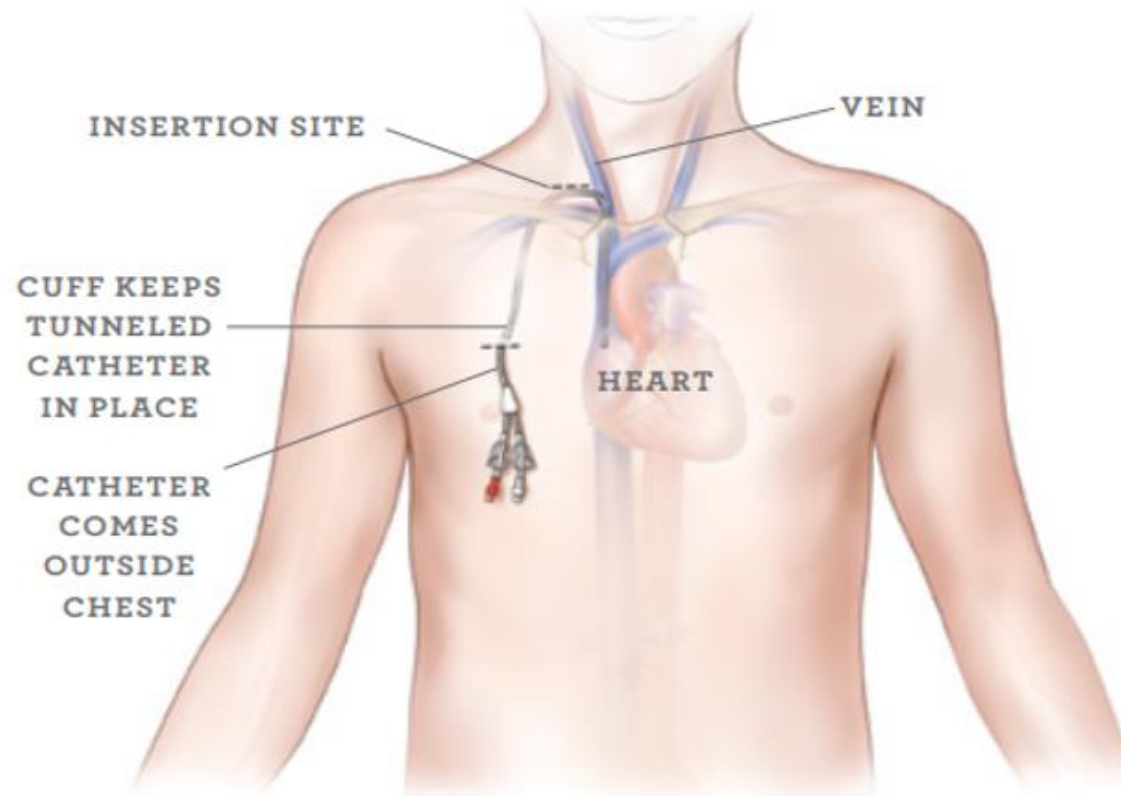
Central Venous Line (CVL): PICC



PICC

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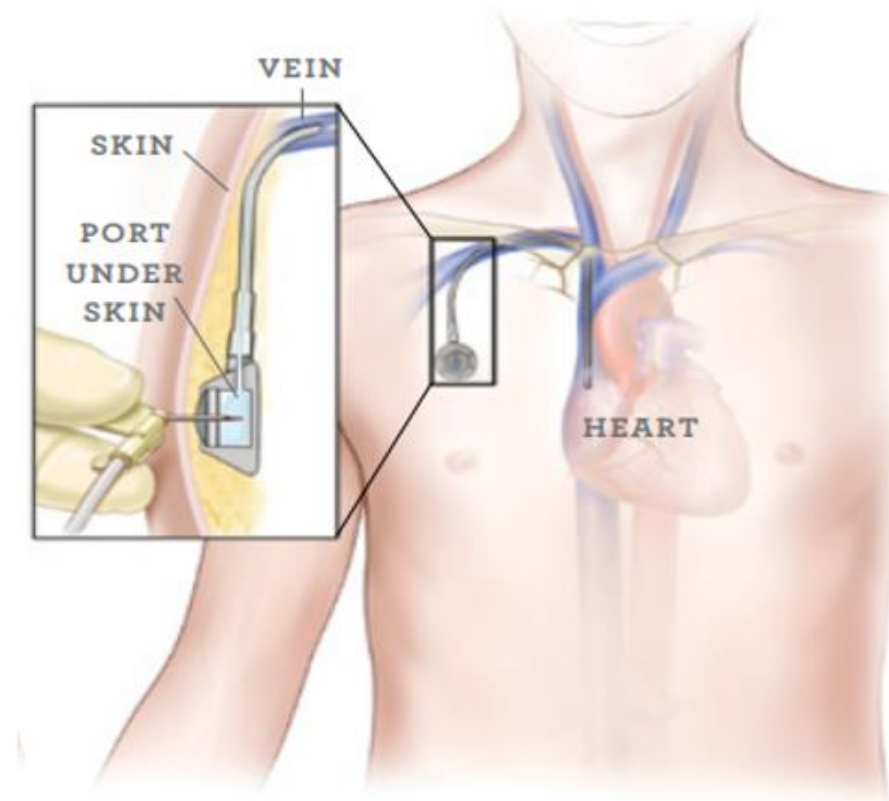
Central Venous Line (CVL): External



EXTERNAL CVL-CHEST

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Central Venous Line: Port



PORT

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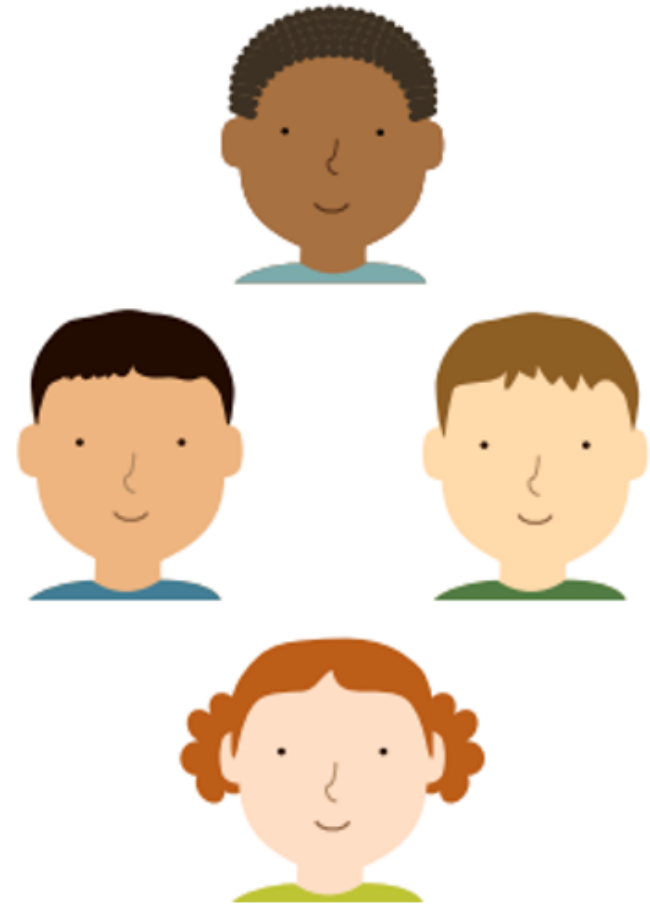
Talking with Your Child About Cancer

- Understanding of cancer and treatment depends on child's age and other factors
- Important for child to know diagnosis and plan
- Health care team members can help
- Talk with your health care team about your needs



Clinical Trials

- Most children with cancer are treated on clinical trials
- Children's Oncology Group conducts clinical trials
- Goal is to improve treatment and support for children with cancer
- Your child's doctor and health care team will explain if a trial is available for your child
- You may choose whether or not to participate



Treatment Overview

CHILDREN'S
ONCOLOGY
GROUP

Treatment Overview

Ask your doctor or nurse to complete this form.

PATIENT NAME _____

DIAGNOSIS _____

TREATMENT WILL LIKELY INCLUDE

Chemotherapy (medicines to kill cancer cells)

Immunotherapy (medicines to boost the body's ability to fight cancer)

Radiation therapy (high energy x-rays to kill cancer cells)

Surgery (operation to remove tumors)

Other _____

TREATMENT SCHEDULE

Treatment will start with _____

Treatment will last _____

TREATMENT LOCATION

Treatments will happen in the hospital (spend the night)

Treatments will happen in the clinic (come during the day and go home the same day)

MY HEALTH CARE TEAM

Doctor(s) _____

Nurse(s) _____

Other(s) _____

HOW TO CONTACT MY HEALTH CARE TEAM

Daytime _____

After Hours _____

Oncology Clinic _____

Inpatient Unit _____

Home Care Company _____

Other _____

- Ask your health care team to help you complete your child's **Treatment Overview**

- Keep this with you

- Show it when needed, such as when visiting the Emergency Room

When to Call for Help

Emergency Help



Call **911** immediately if your child:

- Is not breathing or has severe difficulty breathing
- Has skin and/or lips that look blue
- Is having a seizure
- Does not wake up after you have tried to wake them



When to Call for **Immediate** Help

*Insert your hospital/clinic
phone numbers here:*

Fever:



*Insert your hospital/clinic
fever guidelines here*

Chills (shivering)

Do not wait until the clinic opens

Taking Your Child's Temperature

- Have working thermometer
- Learn how to take child's temperature
- Check child's temperature if they feel warm or do not look or feel well
- Do not take a rectal temperature



When to Call for **Immediate** Help

*Insert your hospital/clinic
phone numbers here:*



Trouble with breathing

**Bleeding that does not
stop within 5-10 minutes**

Do not wait until the clinic opens

When to Call for **Immediate** Help

*Insert your hospital/clinic
phone numbers here:*

Change in behavior

Sudden change in vision

Severe or repeated headache



Do not wait until the clinic opens

When to Call for **Immediate** Help

*Insert your hospital/clinic
phone numbers here:*

New weakness

Uncontrolled pain

A break or leak in the central line



Do not wait until the clinic opens

When to Call for **Immediate** Help

*Insert your hospital/clinic
phone numbers here:*



Repeated vomiting or diarrhea

Not able to drink fluids

Exposure to chicken pox or shingles

Do not wait until the clinic opens

When to Call for Help

*Insert your hospital/clinic
phone numbers here:*



**If you are unsure or
uneasy about *anything*,
it is always better to
call than not call!**

Visiting the Emergency Room (ER)

Tell the ER staff about your child, including:

- Type of cancer
- Last treatment
- Fever requires immediate care, often including antibiotics
- No waiting in areas with other people who may be sick
- No rectal temperature or medications

CHILDREN'S ONCOLOGY GROUP *Treatment Overview*
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Managing Symptoms

Bleeding and Feeling Very Tired

Call if your child has any of these symptoms:

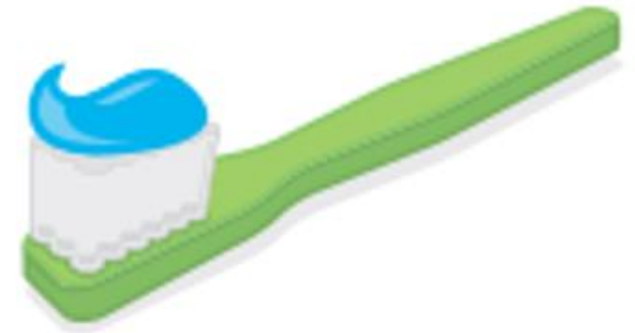
- Very tired
- Pale
- Dizzy
- Bad headache
- Bruising
- Small red dots on skin
- Bleeding from the nose, gums, or around the central venous line



Call **immediately for bleeding that does not stop within 5-10 minutes**

To Prevent Bleeding:

- Avoid rough play and contact sports
- Use a soft toothbrush
- Avoid giving aspirin or ibuprofen



Pain

Call if your child has:

- New or increasing pain
- Pain that is not getting better with the pain medicines you have been given to use at home



Nausea, Vomiting, Diarrhea

- Use medicines given by your health care team
- Give sips of cool, clear liquids
- Offer small bites of foods that are easy to digest, such as:
 - Crackers
 - Rice



Dehydration

- **Call immediately if your child has:**
 - ◆ Dry mouth or lips
 - ◆ No tears when crying
 - ◆ Urinating less than normal
 - ◆ Dark urine
 - ◆ Repeated vomiting or diarrhea
 - ◆ Is not able to drink fluids



Constipation

- **Call if your child has:**
 - ◆ A change in their regular bowel movement pattern (not as often, not as much)
 - ◆ Pain when having a bowel movement
 - ◆ Hard stool even after giving medicine for constipation



Hair Loss

- Hair on all parts of the body may be affected
- Cutting the hair as short as possible may help
- Hair usually grows back when:
 - Treatment gets milder, or
 - After treatment finishes



Preventing Infections

Handwashing

Handwashing helps prevent infection



- Wash hands often with soap and water or use a hand sanitizer:
 - ◆ After using the toilet
 - ◆ Before caring for your child
 - ◆ Before preparing your child's medicines
 - ◆ Before preparing your child's food

Hygiene



**Do not share
cups, utensils**



**Bathe or shower
regularly**

- **Remind your child:**
 - ◆ Not to share cups, water bottles, or eating utensils with other people
 - ◆ Not to share a toothbrush with anyone
 - ◆ To bathe or shower regularly, as instructed by your health care team

Screen Visitors for Illness



- Check with friends and visitors before they arrive
- People can visit your child except if they have:
 - ◆ Fever
 - ◆ Runny nose
 - ◆ Cough
 - ◆ Diarrhea
 - ◆ Rash
 - ◆ Other symptoms of illness
 - ◆ Recently exposed to infection

Caring for Animals

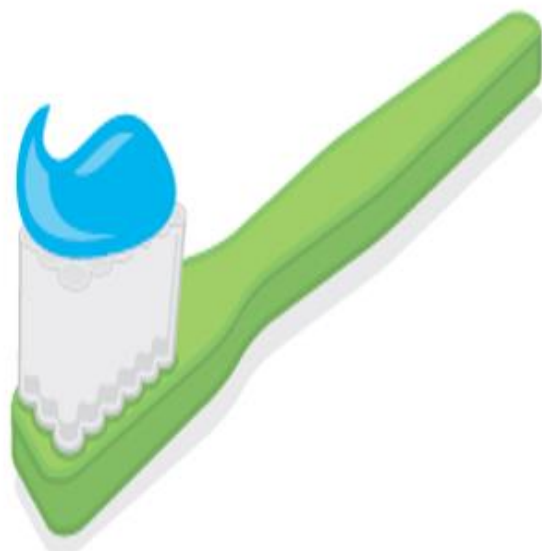


**Do not handle
animal waste**

- Your child should not clean:
 - ◆ Animal or bird cages
 - ◆ Aquariums
 - ◆ Cat litter boxes or animal waste
- If you live on a farm:
 - ◆ Talk with your health care team about safety tips for your child

Precautions During Treatment

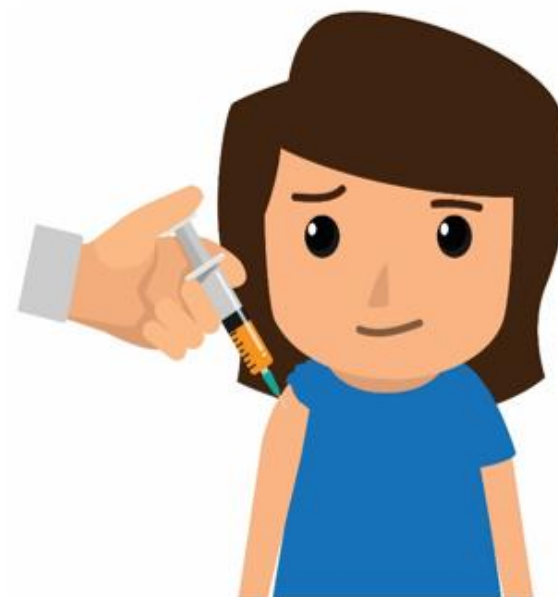
Precautions During Treatment



**Brush teeth
regularly**



**Call if exposed to
chicken pox
(varicella)**



**Talk to your
health care team
about vaccines**

Precautions During Treatment

Take these precautions for 48 hours after the last dose of chemo:



Wear gloves when handling waste



Close the lid, flush two times



Wash soiled clothes separately

Giving Medicines

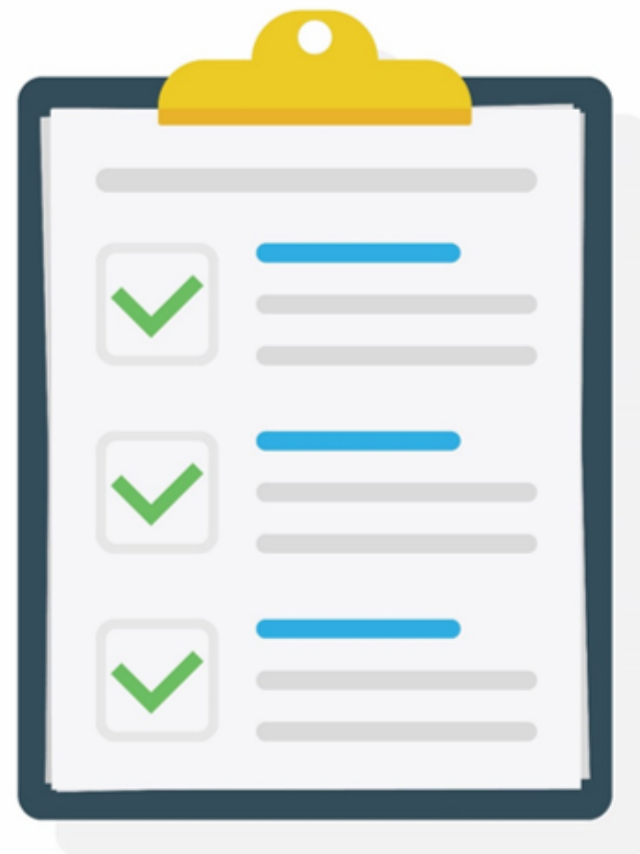
Giving Medicines

- For each medicine, you should know:
 - ◆ Medicine name
 - ◆ What it is for
 - ◆ When to give it
 - ◆ How to give it



After you go home:

- Bring medicines and medicine list with you to the clinic, hospital, or ER
- Tell us when you need a refill
- Keep medicines locked in a safe place



Brain Tumor and Shunt Precautions

Brain Tumor and Shunt Precautions

Call 911 immediately if your child has a:

- Seizure (*and you have NOT been taught what to do at home*)

***Insert your hospital/clinic
phone numbers here:***

Call immediately if your child has:

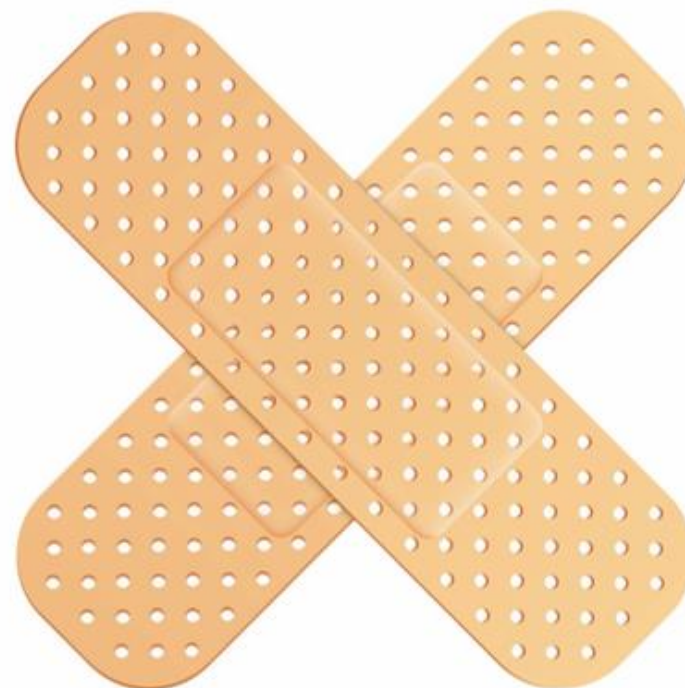
- Severe or repeated headaches
- Repeated vomiting
- Extreme sleepiness
- Irritability
- Confusion
- Swelling or redness along the shunt tract



Wound Care

Wound Care

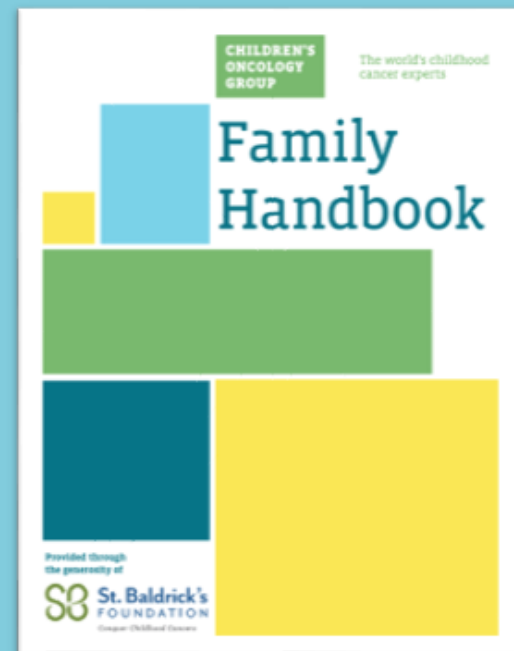
- Your nurse can show you how to care for the wound and change the bandage if needed.
- Keep the area clean and dry.
- Protect the wound until fully healed.



We are here to help!

For more information,
please see the
COG Family Handbook

[https://www.childrensoncologygroup.org/
index.php/cog-family-handbook](https://www.childrensoncologygroup.org/index.php/cog-family-handbook)



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Jeneane Sullivan, *Editor*

Elizabeth Duffy, *Contributor*

Teresa Herriage, *Contributor*

Lori Ranney, *Contributor*

Nancy Tena, *Contributor*

Marie-Hélène Colpron, *Reviewer - French Translation*

Lanipua Yeh-Nayre, *Reviewer - Spanish Translation*

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