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 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

The world's childhood cancer experts
Central Venous Line (CVL): PICC

INSERTION SITE INTO VEIN

PICC
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Central Venous Line (CVL): External

- Insertion site
- Vein
- Cuff keeps tunneled catheter in place
- Catheter comes outside chest

EXTERNAL CVL-CHEST
© 2011 TERESE WINSLOW LLC
Central Venous Line: Port
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

- 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*

The world's childhood cancer experts
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
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
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 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

- 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

Do not share cups, utensils

Bathe or shower regularly
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

- 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

Do not handle animal waste
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
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