

Hello, my name is Sarah. I am a nurse and patient educator at the Cancer Center of Southeastern Ontario. This video is for patients who are receiving cancer treatment by mouth which is also called oral cancer treatment.



During this video you will learn:

- How to take your oral cancer treatment
- How to store your oral cancer treatment
- Safety and oral cancer treatment
- Important things to remember when taking oral cancer treatment
- Who your cancer care team members are
- When and how to get in touch with your cancer care team

## Part 1: How to take your Oral Cancer Treatment (0:50)

For the first part of this video let's start with going over how to take your oral cancer treatment. When taking oral cancer treatment it's important to remember to:

- Wash your hands with soap and warm water before and after taking or touching your cancer treatment pills
- Take your oral cancer drugs by mouth. Swallow your cancer treatment pills whole. Do not crush, chew, or cut tablets. Do not open capsules. If this is not possible, contact your cancer care team.
- If you vomit after taking a cancer treatment pill, do not take another dose. Contact your cancer care team if this happens.
- If you take too many cancer treatment pills by mistake, or if someone else takes them by mistake, contact your cancer care team immediately.
- To help you remember to take your cancer treatment pills at the right time, set a reminder for yourself. This could be setting an alarm on your cell phone or blocking time in your calendar.
- At the end of the video we will review how you can contact your cancer care team.
  
- If you have someone else giving you your cancer treatment pills there are also some important instructions for them to follow. This person should:

- Wash their hands with soap and warm water before and after giving your pills. Try not to touch the pills with bare hands. Tip the pills from the container directly onto a cup or spoon.
- **It is very important that pregnant and breastfeeding caregivers should not touch the cancer treatment pills.**

## How to store your Oral Cancer Treatment (2:38)

For this section of the video we are going to review how you can properly store your oral cancer treatment drug.

- Store in the original bottle or blister pack.
- Do not put them in bottles or pill reminder boxes with any other medications. It could be dangerous to mix them with other pills.
- Some oral cancer treatment medications need to be stored in the fridge read your medication label for instructions on storage
- Keep the pills or tablets away from children and pets
- Do not throw out any unused drugs; bring them to your pharmacy for safe disposal
- Do not throw out cancer treatment drugs in the regular garbage
- Do not flush them down the sink
- Do not flush them down the toilet

## Part 3: Safety and Oral Cancer Treatment (3:32)

Now let's review some safety tips that are important to remember when taking oral cancer treatment.

It is important that you and your caregivers safely handle any bodily fluids for 7 days after each treatment. Your bodily fluids include urine, vomit, stool, blood, semen, and vaginal fluid. This is because small amounts of chemotherapy are in these bodily fluids. Chemotherapy works to treat your cancer but it can be harmful to others if they come in contact with even a small amount.

Safe handling precautions include:

- Flushing the toilet twice after use with the lid down
- Sitting on the toilet when urinating
- Wearing gloves if cleaning up or handling soiled items
- Double bag disposable items that have fluids on them
- Wash any soiled linens twice in your washing machine with hot water and separate from other laundry
- Wear a condom during sexual activity

Eating together, enjoying your favorite activities, and hugging and kissing are all safe for you to do. You can still be around small children and pets.

There are some oral cancer treatments that do not require these safety precautions. Ask your cancer care team if safe handling precautions are required for your oral cancer treatment.

Your primary nurse gave you an oral cancer treatment care plan at your clinic appointment. This care plan includes:

- Cancer Care Ontario medication information sheet, which is specific to your oral cancer treatment.
- Chemotherapy and other drug therapies booklet
- A diary to record when you take your oral cancer treatment and any side effects you may experience.

If needed your primary nurse may also give you:

- A fever card
- Hazardous drugs and safety in the home information booklet. For more information on safe handling precautions, please refer to this booklet.

## Reminders when taking Oral Cancer Treatment (5:57)

When taking your oral cancer treatment there are some important key pieces of information for you to remember.

- **It is important that you take your oral cancer treatment exactly as your doctor prescribed**
- Tell your cancer doctor or nurse about any side effects you have
- Use your oral cancer treatment diary to keep track of side effects and when you take your oral cancer treatment. Bring your diary with you to your next appointment. If you have any questions about how to control side effects ask your doctor or nurse.
- Tell us if you have trouble paying for or getting your oral cancer treatment
- Tell your other doctors, dentists, or healthcare providers that you are taking oral cancer treatment to treat your cancer
- Carry a list of medications with you that you are taking, including your cancer pills or tablets
- Plan ahead for oral cancer treatment refills. Talk to your local pharmacist about how much notice is needed for a refill
- Plan ahead for travel and weekends
- Take a picture of the label on your oral cancer treatment bottles. Bring the picture with you to all appointments with your cancer doctor or nurse. If your oral cancer



treatment changes make sure to take a new picture. You can take a picture using a cell phone, tablet, or camera . If you are not able to take a picture, bring your oral cancer treatment bottles to every appointment at the Cancer Centre

## Your Oral Cancer Treatment team (7:36)

Your cancer care team is available to help you with your oral cancer treatment. Here are some of the team members that you may meet as part of your oral cancer treatment.

### **Leslie, Pharmacist**

*Hi, my name is Leslie. I'm a pharmacist at the Cancer Centre. Before you start your oral cancer treatment, a Cancer Centre pharmacist will call you at home between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. to discuss your oral cancer treatments. If you are not home, the pharmacists will leave a message or phone you back later in the day. We will provide you with education about your oral cancer treatments, like what medications or foods to avoid and what to do if you miss a dose. Every time your oral cancer treatment is ordered by your cancer doctor, a Cancer Centre pharmacist reviews the order to make sure that the medication is safe for you to take. We also make sure that your oral cancer treatment prescription is sent to your community pharmacy or a pharmacy that has your medication.*



### **Bev, Primary Nurse**

*Hi, my name is Bev. I am a primary nurse in the Cancer Centre. I or one of my colleagues will call you at home about 10 to 14 days after your treatment has started to see how you are doing with your oral cancer treatment. We will ask questions about your medication, any side effects from your medication, if you have missed any doses, and answer any questions you might have.*



### **Patrice, Drug Access Coordinator**

*Hi, my name is Patrice. I am a drug access coordinator at the Cancer Centre. I help with access to and funding for medications. You may receive a call from me to discuss medication coverage.*



## **When to contact your Cancer Care Team (9:25)**

When you are taking your oral cancer treatment, you will likely have questions come up and might be wondering when it is appropriate to contact your cancer care team.

Contact your cancer care team right away when the following occurs:

- If you have trouble swallowing or keeping the cancer treatment pills in your stomach
- If you vomit after taking a cancer treatment pill. If this happens do not take another dose
- If you took another dose
- If you take too many cancer treatment pills by mistake or if somebody else takes them by mistake
- If you miss a dose, check your Medication Information Sheet for instructions. If you are unsure, call your cancer care team
- If you have a fever of **38.3° Celsius once** or a fever of **38.0° Celsius for over an hour** go to your nearest emergency department right away. Bring your fever card with you. Do not take any medication to treat the fever

## **How to contact your Cancer Care Team (10:35)**

Your cancer care team is always here to help you to answer any questions you may have. Depending on the time of day there are several ways to get in contact with us.

The Cancer Centre is open Monday to Friday between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. During this time please phone: 613-549-6666 or toll free 1-800-567-5722

Once you've dialed the number you will then be prompted to enter the extension for your cancer doctors medical secretary. The medical secretary will transfer your question or concern to your doctor or nurse and someone will call you back.

You can find this information on the business card of your cancer doctor which you received at your first appointment.

## Oral Cancer Treatment – Video transcript

The Cancer Centre is closed during the week after 4 p.m., as well as on weekends and holidays. If you need help or have any questions related to your oral cancer treatment when the Cancer Centre is closed, here are the steps to follow:

Phone 613-549-6666 or toll free 1-800-567-5722 press '0' to speak with the switchboard operator.

Tell the switchboard operator your cancer doctor's name and they will page the on-call doctor for you. The operator will take your name and telephone number and the on-call doctor will call you back.

This ends our video on oral cancer treatment. If you would like more information, visit our website at [www.CancerCareSouthEast.ca](http://www.CancerCareSouthEast.ca)

### Contact us

Phone: 613-549-6666

Toll Free: 1-800-567-5722

[www.CancerCareSouthEast.ca](http://www.CancerCareSouthEast.ca)

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