



Home care management for low risk neutropenic sepsis

This leaflet is for patients receiving cancer treatments who have been assessed as having low risk neutropenic sepsis.

What is neutropenic sepsis?

Chemotherapy and other cancer treatments can stop the bone marrow producing the white blood cells that fight infection. This can be dangerous, as infections can have a much greater effect, sometimes resulting in a more severe infection with bacteria found in the blood (septicaemia or sepsis). Septicaemia which occurs when blood counts are low is called neutropenic sepsis. For this reason, we ask patients receiving chemotherapy who are unwell or have a temperature to contact us quickly or come into the hospital so that their blood counts can be checked.

What happens then?

Once a patient comes to hospital, they will have antibiotics and investigations. They are then assessed and if they are 'high risk', they need to remain in hospital for intravenous treatment (via a drip) and monitoring. Patients should always bring their 'alert card' or chemotherapy book with them. Those that are assessed as 'low risk' can be discharged from hospital with an antibiotic prescription but will be kept under daily telephone review to ensure they are improving.

Managing low risk neutropenic sepsis at home

You have found to be at low risk and can go home on oral antibiotics. In order for it to be safe to send you home, we need you to agree to the following:

1. I agree to be contacted daily by the cancer nursing team to check that I am still feeling alright and to answer some simple questions. This will normally be between 9am-10am every day.
2. I will provide a contact telephone number on which you can speak to me (and a further emergency contact).
3. I will return to the hospital if directed to do so.
4. I agree to take antibiotic tablets as directed by the doctor or nurse who discharged me.
5. That I contact the emergency chemotherapy number if I begin to feel unwell, or come straight back to hospital via the Emergency Department (A&E).
6. That I check my temperature before 9am every morning, or anytime if I feel unwell.

If you need to speak with the acute oncology nurses, please ring 07775 006062.

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

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