

# Allogenic Stem Cell Transplant Discharge Instructions

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The following guidelines apply to the first 6 months after transplant, or until you are off all medications that suppress your immune system (for example: Medrol®, Prednisone, Tacrolimus, Cyclosporine). Ask your doctor for more specific instructions. Remember that the following may not apply to each individual patient. Please consult with the Bone Marrow Transplant team if you have additional questions.

You are also required to stay **within 90 miles driving distance of U of M Hospital for the first 100 days after transplant**. If you do not have lodging set up, ask to speak with the BMT social worker before you are discharged.

## **When do I need to call the BMT doctor?**

- Temperature over 100.5 degrees Fahrenheit
- Shaking or chills
- New cough or difficulty breathing
- Persistent headaches
- Blurred or double vision
- Bleeding problems such as:
  - Nose bleeds
  - Blood in urine or stool
  - Vomiting blood
  - Increased bruising
- Pain with urination or bowel movements
- Decrease in frequency of urination
- New or persistent nausea/vomiting and/or if you have more than 3 vomiting episodes in an 8hr period

- New or persistent diarrhea and/or if you have more than 3 episodes in an 8hr period
- Problems with eating such as:
  - Unable to keep food, fluids, or medications down
  - Having no interest in eating
  - Difficulty swallowing
  - Sore throat
  - Development of mouth sores
- Pain that is not controlled with prescribed pain medications
- Changes or difficulty with your central line such as:
  - Difficulty flushing
  - Redness, drainage, pain, or site looks different
- Changes with skin color or new rash
- Reddened, swollen, or painful areas
- Change in wound (unusual pain, drainage, swelling, or redness)
- Changes in mental status or confusion
- Increased sleepiness
- Fevers, chills, or hives after getting a blood transfusion

### **How do I call?**

The BMT Clinic is open Monday through Friday, from 8am to 5 pm. During these hours, call 734-936-9814. After 5pm, on weekends, and holidays, call 734-936-6267 and ask for the BMT physician on-call. You can also refer to the blue handout in your discharge folder labeled “BMT Discharge Contact Information.” This gives you several phone numbers that you may find helpful. If you have any questions or concerns about anything, do not hesitate to call.

## **How will I care for myself at home?**

### **Handwashing and hygiene**

- Wash your hands often! At a minimum, you should wash your hands before eating, after bathroom use, and after contact with people and/or pets.
- Shower every day. Use liquid soap and new washcloth each day, do not use bar soap or loofa.

### **People, Places, and Preventing Infections**

- Avoid anyone ill.
- Avoid crowds when possible.
- Limit exposure to children outside your immediate family who are less than 12 years old.
- Avoid wearing contact lenses. Wear eye glasses to prevent infection.
- Notify BMT clinic of exposure to communicable diseases (ie: chickenpox, shingles, flu, etc).
- Deep cleaning of your house is not necessary before you go home, just have caregiver wipe down surfaces, dust, and vacuum.
- Avoid construction areas or anywhere dirt and soil are being moved.
- Avoid dirty, dusty, or moldy environments.
- Avoid lung irritants such as smoking, second hand smoke, aerosols, and spray paint.

### **Do I need to wear a mask?**

- You do not need a mask unless you have a low white blood cell count (neutropenic), you are around construction, or someone is mowing the lawn. Wear a yellow mask when you are coming to and from clinic appointments. It is a good idea to keep a mask with you at all times while out in public in case you run into a crowd, construction, or someone mowing grass. Your doctor will then discuss with you when it is no longer necessary to wear a mask.

## **Bleeding Precautions**

You are at highest risk of bleeding when your platelet count is 50,000 or less.

Take these precautions if this applies to you:

- Do not floss, use soft toothbrush
- Do not blow your nose harshly
- Do not rub your eyes
- Do not scratch your skin hard
- Do not strain with bowel movements
- Do not have sexual intercourse (vaginal or anal)
- Do not shave with a razor. Only use electric clippers for hair cutting
- Do not play contact sports
- Avoid popcorn and hard to chew items
- Avoid vomiting if possible, use anti-nausea meds preventatively
- Nothing in your rectum or vagina (no enemas, tampons, etc)

## **Pets**

- Current pets are ok. No contact with new pets, birds, reptiles, or farm animals.
- No pets sleeping with you.
- Wash hands after direct contact with pets.
- No contact with cat litter or any animal excretions.
- Avoid pets on raw food diets.
- No reptiles or amphibians should be kept in the house or handled by you.
- It is a good idea to keep your pet clean and their shots up to date.

## **Plants/Flowers**

- Plants may stay in the home but do not handle or care for them.
- Avoid direct contact with plants, trees, flowers and mulch.
- No yardwork, gardening or digging in soil.
- Go inside during lawn mowing.

- No live Christmas trees.
- Wood burning stoves & fireplaces may be used if vented properly. No wood should be stored in the house or handled by you.

### **Travel and Driving**

Ask your doctor when you can travel and drive.

### **Return to work or school**

In most cases, at or around 1 year after your transplant date you can return to work or school. Your return should be approved by your doctor, as individuals vary greatly in their time to recovery.

### **Skin and Sun**

You will need to take steps to make sure you are protected from the sun, beginning on your transplant date. Your skin will be much more sensitive to the sun and will burn easily because of the high doses of chemotherapy used in transplant.

- Avoid exposure to sunlight, especially within the first 100 days after transplant.
- If exposure to sunlight is unavoidable, use as much protection as possible such as long sleeve shirts, long pants, hat, sunscreen SPF 30 or higher.

### **Physical activity**

- Gradually increase activity as tolerated. Activity outdoors, such as walking, is good for you.
- Trail Hiking is ok but no camping, hunting, fishing, or deep woods hiking.
- No contact sports such as soccer, hockey, basketball, football or strenuous weightlifting if platelet count is less than 50,000.
- No swimming in lakes, ponds, hot tubs, or public pools.

## **Sexual Activity**

- You can resume intercourse when your platelet count is greater than 50,000.
- Use standard safe sex precautions.
- Use a condom to prevent risk of infection.
- No anal intercourse.
- No kissing or oral sex if your partner has any mouth sores.
- Use water-based lube for vaginal dryness.

## **Diet and food safety**

- Use the FDA Food Safety booklet you received from the dietary team for 6 months after transplant, until you are off all immunosuppressive medications, or as long as your doctor instructs you to use it.

## **Medications**

You will receive specific instructions before you leave the hospital about the medications you are taking.

- Bring all medications you are taking and your list of medications to your clinic appointments.
- Only take what is prescribed to you.
- Do **NOT** take immunosuppression medication (example: Tacrolimus or Cyclosporine) on the morning of your clinic appointment until **after** getting labs drawn. If you take this medication before labs being drawn, it will give a falsely high result.
- Avoid Acetaminophen (Tylenol®), Ibuprofen (Motrin®, Advil®), Aspirin (Bayer®, Excedrin®), and Naproxen (Aleve®) unless instructed by your doctor.
- Avoid herbal supplements and over the counter medications unless prescribed by your doctor.

## Central Line care

Refer to Central Line/Tunneled Catheter Manual in your discharge folder for instructions. Continue to care for your line as you were instructed before discharge from the hospital. For questions about central line care or supplies, call your visiting nurse agency or home supply company for more information.

## Immunizations

You will need to be re-immunized one year after your transplant. You will be given an immunization schedule with recommendations.

## What is my BMT follow-up care?

- Before you get discharged from the hospital, you will receive a date and time for your first BMT clinic appointment. This appointment will typically be within a few days of being discharged from the hospital.
- Be sure to get labs drawn **before** this appointment at the blood drawing station on level 2 of Mott Children and Women's Hospital.
  - **Do not** take immunosuppression medication (example: Tacrolimus or Cyclosporine) on the morning of your clinic appointment until **after** getting labs drawn. If you take this medication before labs being drawn, it will give a falsely high result.
  - Make sure that blood drawing station personnel **do not** draw labs off of any lumens that have pink colored tape on them (typically blue lumen). This lumen(s) had your immunosuppression medication infused through it while in the hospital and will give falsely high results on your labs.
- You will then proceed to the 7<sup>th</sup> floor of Mott Children and Women's Hospital and check into the BMT clinic at Reception B.
- Additional follow-up BMT clinic visits will be scheduled at this time. Be aware that you will have at least one clinic appointment per week.

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