

Safe Handling of Body Fluids at Home

Small amounts of your cancer treatment medicines may be in your body fluids for several days. Examples of these body fluids include saliva, mucus, blood, urine (pee), bowel movements (poop), vomit and those from sex. Since these medicines can also harm healthy cells, it is best if other people aren't exposed to them. This handout lists safety measures to help prevent contact with your body fluids at home.



Follow these guidelines **for 7 days** after each cancer treatment.

If you take cancer treatment pills, follow these guidelines at all times, even if you take a break from oral cancer treatment. When you are done taking all of your treatment, follow these guidelines for 7 days after your last dose.

Basic guidelines for handling body fluids

- Try to handle your own body fluids when you can. Wash your hands with soap and water after touching body fluids or soiled items.
- Don't let pregnant women, children or pets touch body fluids or items that may contain these fluids.
- Family and caregivers should wear 2 pairs of gloves when cleaning up your body fluids or items that hold your body fluids such as soiled laundry or a basin for vomit. Don't use gloves with holes or tears.
- Turn gloves inside out when taking them off – try not to touch the outside of the gloves. Place used gloves in a sealed bag and throw away after one use. Wash hands with soap and water after gloves are off.



In the bathroom

- Wash hands well with soap and water after using the bathroom. Don't touch other items or surfaces until after you wash your hands.
- If you can, use your own bathroom. If you can't use your own bathroom, wipe the toilet seat and rim with a sanitizing wipe after each use. After cleaning, wash your hands with soap and water before touching anything. 7 days after your last treatment, wash the toilet and bathroom floor.
- Sit on the toilet to avoid splashing. If pee or poop gets on your skin, wash the area with soap and water.
- Close the lid before flushing. If you have a low flow toilet, put the lid down and flush the toilet twice. This helps make sure body waste isn't left in the toilet.



Washing items soiled with body fluids



- Wash items soiled with body fluids in a washing machine right away. If needed, put soiled items in a sealed plastic bag until you can wash them. After items are in the washing machine, throw away the bag.
- Don't wash soiled items with other clothing. Put soiled items through the wash cycle twice using hot water and detergent. Bleach can also be added.
- If you can, handle your own soiled items. If other people touch them, they should wear 2 pairs of gloves and avoid letting the soiled items touch their clothing. Wash clothing or skin that touches soiled items.

Clean up

If you use a basin for vomit, bedpan, or urinal, wash it with soap and water after each use. Family and caregivers should wear 2 pairs of gloves if they touch these items or clean the bathroom. Place used gloves in a sealed bag and put them in a trash can with a lid.

If you don't have control of your bladder or bowels

Use diapers or throw-away plastic backed pads to absorb pee or poop. Change these items right away if they are soiled. Wash soiled skin with soap and water. If you have an ostomy, family and caregivers should wear 2 pairs of gloves if they empty or change the pouches. Place gloves and any soiled or used items in a bag before putting in a trash can with a lid.

Sex

After getting cancer treatment, small amounts of your medicines may be in vaginal fluid or semen. We do not know if these medicines can harm a sexual partner. To help protect your partner, we recommend that you use a barrier during any type of sex.

If you take cancer treatment pills or get IV cancer treatment in your home, you need to follow extra safety guidelines. Talk with your doctor or nurse to learn more.

This info is a general resource. It is not meant to replace your provider's advice. Ask your doctor or health care team any questions. Always follow their instructions.