

HOW TO PREPARE FOR INTRAVESICAL BCG THERAPY

- Intravesical BCG therapy is given in patients who have previously undergone endoscopic surgery for bladder tumor. Only those patients with complete removal of the tumor are given this therapy. Your doctor will let you know if you need this therapy.
- Intravesical BCG therapy is given in induction (weekly six doses) and maintenance (monthly doses for 1 year or weekly 3 doses at 3/6/12/18/24/30/36 months as decided by your urologist) regimen parts.
- Along with intravesical therapy, you will also undergo regular check cystoscopy (endoscopic evaluation of the urinary bladder) to make sure that your tumor has not come back.

WHAT HAPPENS ON THE DAY I GET BCG?

1. Do not drink for at least 4 hours before your therapy. This is to make sure your bladder is not full. You can sip a little liquid to keep your mouth moist. You can have your breakfast.
2. Do not take any diuretic medicine (water pills) before your appointment. You can take diuretic medicine 4 hours after your therapy. Other medicines may be taken before therapy with a sip of water, if needed.
3. Let your doctor know if you have any urinary burning, fever or blood in urine. The doctor may need to evaluate you for an UTI and withhold therapy that day.
4. You will be made to lie down on the examination table. A catheter will be placed into your bladder to empty any residual urine and instil the BCG.
5. The medicine should remain in your bladder for two hours for best results. If you must urinate before two hours, let your doctor know as to how long you were able to hold the medicine.
6. Urinate after two hours. Avoid splashing urine in the urinal. *Men may need to sit for the same.* Completely empty your bladder.
7. Wash your hands and genital area with soap and water after urinating.
8. After urinating and washing your skin, pour two cups of bleach (Clorox/Harpic bleach or equivalent) into the toilet. *Let the bleach and BCG mixture stay in the toilet for 15-20 minutes before flushing.* Flush the toilet. **(Remember: BCG**

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is a weakened –not dead – bacteria. It is important to kill the bacteria so it won't affect others)

9. *Repeat steps 6-8 each time you urinate for the next six hours. You should plan to stay home and use the same toilet for those six hours. Drink at least 250 ml (8 oz) of liquid every hour for those six hours to help flush the bladder well.*

WHAT ARE THE SIDE EFFECTS OF BCG AND WHAT DO I DO ABOUT THEM?

- Burning micturition and frequency of urination: increase your fluid intake. Avoid caffeine and alcohol. Burning and frequency may get worse during the treatment. The doctor may prescribe you some medications to help with these symptoms.
- Low-grade fevers (up to 100 F), fatigue, aching, and flu-like symptoms: You may take a Paracetamol 500 mg tablet to help relieve these symptoms. Drink as much fluid as you can to keep the urine clear. Rest. These symptoms occur because the BCG stimulates your immune system.
- Blood in the urine: Irritation of bladder wall caused by the BCG leads to bleeding that can turn your urine red. Drink plenty of fluids to keep your urine clear and to prevent blood clots from forming in the bladder. Bleeding most often resolves.

If you have a fever over 101 F, chills, rash, continuous bleeding, prolonged cough, specific joint pain, or if any of the above symptoms last longer than 48 hours, you need to contact your doctor or visit the hospital emergency at the earliest. More severe symptoms often indicate a serious reaction to the BCG and may require admission.

ARE THERE ANY PRECAUTIONS I NEED TO TAKE REGARDING SEX?

- Avoid sexual intercourse for at least 48 hours after each BCG instillation. Men must wear a condom for the entire course of the six-week treatment and for six additional weeks after treatment has ended.
- Women should avoid vaginal contact for one week following each treatment and for six additional weeks after treatment has ended. (Remember: BCG is a weakened –not dead – bacteria that could affect others)

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