



A guide to...

Intravesical Bacillus Calmette-Guerin (BCG) Immunotherapy treatment

Patient Information

Urology Department
Watford General Hospital
Hemel Hempstead Hospital
St Albans City Hospital

A URINE SAMPLE IS REQUIRED BEFORE EACH TREATMENT

Effects of treatment

The treatment causes an immune reaction in your bladder lining that will help you to shed any bladder cancer cells after your TURBT (tumour resection) and hopefully prevents any recurrence.

Your recommended treatment will be discussed with you when you attend your appointment with your **oncologist or urologist**.

The treatment is given in clinic as an outpatient by a urology nurse specialist.

If you feel unwell, or are unable to make the appointment, please let us know as soon as possible.

Length of treatment

Your treatment will run over consecutive weeks, - either over six for *Induction* or three for *Maintenance*.

Exceptions to this will be made for patients having difficulty with weekly instillations.

What is involved in the treatment

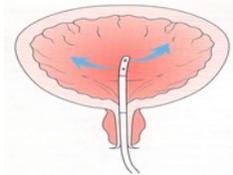
Before the first treatment is given you will be asked questions about any previous illnesses, operations or medication you may be taking. Please bring a list of current medicines with you (some medicines may interfere with the way BCG works).

You will be asked to sign a consent form to agree to the treatment.

Please bring a urine specimen or when you arrive in the clinic please ask for a urine sample pot and provide a sample; we will test this to make sure there is no infection. If there were then we would have to postpone the treatment and prescribe some antibiotic, as infection makes complications more likely.

How the treatment is given

A fine tube called a catheter will be passed into your bladder and the BCG will be administered through this.



You will be allowed home after the administration of the BCG but please try not to pass urine for **two hours** for maximum effect, if this is not possible then as long as you can. Please report the length you held the BCG to the nurse on your next visit.

Ways to make your treatment more comfortable

- Drink at least three to four pints (two litres) of water every day during your six or three weeks of treatment.
- **Please ensure you drink this much the day before your treatment.**
- **DO NOT** drink anything for **four hours** before your treatment, this will reduce the amount of urine you make so you can be comfortable and retain the BCG in your bladder for the **two hours**. You can eat as normal.

- If you need to take tablets in the morning please do so, with as little water as possible. If you take diuretic medicines (“water tablets”), you should take them after treatment or at least six hours before the appointment.

Instructions after treatment

Please **do not** hold the BCG in your bladder for longer than **two hours**.

Once the two hours has passed, go to the toilet and empty your bladder.

You can now start drinking plenty of fluids (two to three litres) for the first 24 hours following treatment. Avoid caffeine drinks eg coffee, cola etc. Use decaffeinated drinks, cranberry juice and barley waters. This will help flush the BCG from your bladder and minimise the urinary symptoms caused by the BCG.

It is recommended that every time you pass urine over the next **six hours** that:

You should sit down when passing urine, this reduces the risk of spillage onto skin or outside the toilet. Also, washing around the genital area (with soap and water after each pee) is recommended during this period or use a handful of wet tissue to cleanse yourself after passing urine, pat dry with dry tissue. Drop this in the toilet.

Each time you pass urine - **before flushing**, add two cups of undiluted household bleach around the toilet as if you are cleaning it, leave for 15 minutes before flushing; this should continue for the **six** hours following the first pee.

Ensure no one else uses the toilet before flushing. Please inform other members of the household that you have added bleach to the toilet; also ensure you are vigilant if you have small children or grandchildren visiting you.

Make sure you wash your hands thoroughly each time.

In order to protect your partner, you should abstain from sexual activity for 48 hours following treatment and use a condom during intercourse during the course of treatment and for six weeks after completion of treatment.

Make sure you clean down the toilet/bathroom after the 6 hours have passed using diluted bleach to clean all surfaces.

Potential side-effects

Approximately 9 out of 10 people having BCG treatment will develop some side effects; these usually begin within three to four hours after treatment and may last two to three days.

Most commonly, these include:

Pain when passing urine and passing urine more frequently; this may feel like cystitis. Blood in the urine. Drinking plenty of fluids will help reduce these symptoms; avoiding caffeinated drinks may reduce the frequency in passing urine.

“Flu-like” symptoms including fever, tiredness and aches. Taking regular paracetamol after treatment should help ease these feelings.

If these symptoms last more than two to three days contact your nurse specialist or GP. **However these symptoms may get worse as the course of treatment progresses.**

If you develop any of the following symptoms, contact your nurse specialist or see a doctor immediately. These symptoms are rare and it is important that you seek advice and if necessary attend A&E Department

- High temperature (above 39°C)
- Difficulty breathing
- Facial swelling
- Vomiting
- Joint pain
- Skin rash
- Cough

These symptoms could mean that you have had an allergic reaction or your BCG treatment is reacting with the rest of your body.

If you do see a doctor, please let them know that you are receiving BCG treatment for bladder cancer.

YOU MUST INFORM THE NURSE OF ANY SIDE EFFECTS ON YOUR NEXT ATTENDANCE.

A cystoscopy will be arranged for you after your course of treatment is completed. Please contact the hospital if you do not hear about this appointment.

Further BCG treatment may be necessary; this is called a maintenance course. If you are due to have maintenance BCG and have not received a date for treatment, please contact us.

The BCG programme we use at West Herts is:

Starting with six treatments (Induction course) and,

The following maintenance schedule should be attempted if patient can tolerate it with flexible cystoscopy after completion of each cycle.

At three months	X 3 weekly doses
At three months	X 3 weekly doses
Six-monthly thereafter	for three years in total

Useful Telephone Numbers

Watford General Hospital 01923-244366
Uro-Oncology Nurse Specialists 01923-436651
Urology Nurses Specialists 01923-217729

Mr Banks' Secretary 01923-217521
Mr Shah's Secretary 01923-217052
Mr Shaikh's Secretary 01727-897147
Mr Roux's Secretary 01727-897116
Mr Arumuham's Secretary 01923-217064

Further information

How to contact us

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If you need this leaflet in another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01923 217 187** or email **westherts.pals.nhs.uk**



References

Babjuk M, et al. EAU Guidelines on Non-Muscle-invasive Urothelial Carcinoma of the Bladder: Update 2016. Eur Urol (2016)

European Association of Urology Nurses (2015) Evidence-based Guidelines for Best Practice in Urological Health Care – Intravesical Instillation with Mitomycin-C or Bacillus Calmette-Guerin in non-muscle invasive bladder cancer.

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