Keeping Your Child Safe During Cancer Treatment

Medicines

- Do not take ibuprofen (Motrin®) or aspirin.
- Take temperature before giving acetaminophen (Tylenol®). Call clinic if 100.4°F (38°C) or higher.
- TMP-sulfa will be prescribed twice per day, two days per week (Saturday/Sunday). This is to prevent a lung infection called pneumocystis jirovecii (PJP). Tell your provider if your child is not able to take this medicine or if they miss a dose.
- No suppositories or medicines given rectally.

Handwashing

Handwashing is the most important way to prevent infections.

- Use antibacterial soap in a pump dispenser.
- Wash hands for a minimum of 30 seconds.
- Wash hands before preparing or eating food.
- Wash hands after using the bathroom.
- Wash hands after playing with pets, toys, or being outside.
- Ask that all staff wash their hands before providing care.

Daily Hygiene

- A daily bath or shower is required in the hospital with a special soap called CHG. Daily baths/showers are recommended at home.
- If you have well water, it must be tested for bacteria before using it for washing or drinking. For more information, go to WI Department of Natural Resources website at https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Wells/privateWelltest.html or can find tests on Amazon. The kit must include a test for fecal coliforms.
- Remove all Band-Aids/dressings within 24 hours unless told otherwise.

Oral Care

- Brush with soft toothbrush and fluoride toothpaste 2-3 times daily.
- Replace/use new toothbrush every 4 weeks.
- Flossing should be avoided during treatment. This can cause trauma to the tissue in the mouth and increase risk of infection.
- Fluoride supplements can be used if required.

Dental Care

- Dental care is important to your child's overall health. Talk to your provider about the safest timing for dental visits.
- If your child has a dental issue or concern, tell your provider. Notify providers several days before dental visits. They will look at blood counts to be sure a visit is safe.

Skin Care

- Wear a waterproof sunscreen SPF 30 or higher on exposed areas of skin. Infants 6 months old or younger should not wear sunscreen but should avoid direct sunlight and wear protective clothing.
- Wear hat/scarf and protective clothing as needed.
- Wear mosquito repellant when at risk for insect bites.

- Always wear shoes to prevent cuts or other injuries to feet.
- No new body piercings or tattoos.

Nail Care

- Keep nails short and straight across.
- Report ingrown toenails.

Stools

Your child is at increased risk of constipation. Follow instructions for diet, fluids, and medicines to prevent and manage constipation.

- Report blood in stools, rectal tear, or painful bowel movements.
- No rectal temperatures, suppositories, or enemas.

Nutrition

- No drinking well water unless tested (use bottled water). See Daily Hygiene section for more details.
- No unpasteurized milk, apple cider, or syrup.
- Eat only well-cooked fish, meat, and eggs.
- Clean all raw fruits and vegetables.
- Wipe the lids of canned goods well before opening.
- No aged/moldy cheese.

Pets

- All pets must be up to date on immunizations.
- Your child should not touch or care for any exotic pets (such as lizards, snakes/turtles, birds, etc.).
- No contact with pet waste, cages, or fishbowls (such as cat litter, terrarium, etc.).
- Make sure your child washes their hands well after contact with pets.
- Your child should not sleep with pets. Pets should not be in your child's bed.
- Family pets and your child should be kept away from barnyard animals.

Environment

- A mask is **not** needed outside of the hospital, except after a stem cell transplant.
- Keep your home clean and well ventilated.
- Avoid areas that are difficult to keep clean such as areas with old carpet, or wet or unfinished basements.
- Plants are allowed in the home, but not in patient's room. Patient should not touch the dirt.
- No bedside vaporizers, humidifiers or diffusers.
- Avoid being in hayfields, barns, corn mazes or around petting farm animals.
- Avoid buildings under construction or renovation. The child may return to the area when construction is done and the area is well cleaned. Allow at least 48 hours before returning to an area where carpet or walls were removed.
- Avoid playing in dirt or sand from a sandbox that is uncovered.
- Family members should not smoke in the home.
- Avoid direct contact with people who may have an infectious disease.

Swimming

- If your child has a port and it is **not** accessed, they may swim in a chlorinated pool. They should shower after swimming.
- Do not swim in lakes and ponds. Do not use hot tubs/whirlpools.
- Children with external central line catheters (ex. Hickman, PICC line) and stem cell transplant patients cannot swim in pools or other bodies of water.

- Do not play in areas of stagnant water, such as water tables or backyard pools, that are not cleaned and dried before filling with water.

Vaccines

- **No** vaccines (immunizations) until 1-year after treatment is complete (except as noted below).
- Family should not receive oral polio vaccine. (The polio vaccine injection is acceptable.)
- Your child and caretakers/ family members are encouraged to get the yearly inactivated influenza vaccine shot (**not** nasal flu mist) and COVID booster (if approved by provider).
- Siblings may get the varicella zoster (chicken pox) vaccine.

Contagious Diseases

Titers are done at diagnosis for varicella zoster, measles, herpes simplex, and CMV to check your child's immune protection.

Chicken pox precautions:

- Report exposure to chicken pox (at least 1 hour of direct contact 2 days before breakout and during pox period)
- Report exposure to shingles.
- Report any rash to rule out chicken pox.
- Family, friends, and classmates (including classmate's parents) should report chicken pox in the family.

These chicken pox precautions will continue until 1 year after treatment is done.

Measles precautions:

- Immediately report **any** exposure to measles (regardless of titer status).
- Call the clinic if there is an outbreak in the school or community.

School Attendance

- Talk with your provider about school attendance. School is an important part of your child's wellbeing. When children are feeling well and able, we encourage school attendance. There may be times during treatment that it would be safer for your child to stay home and participate in remote learning.
- Notify school nurse of child's diagnosis and new special precautions. Our team will provide a letter to your child's school with general information and special precautions.

Adolescent/Young Adult Instructions

- Use condoms if sexually active.
- Do not engage in rectal or oral sex.
- Use water-based lubricant for vaginal dryness.
- Report vaginal itching or discharge to clinic.
- Avoid douching.
- Recommend using pads for menstruation.
- If using tampons, change frequently.
- No alcohol or smoking.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 9/2024. University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#8366.