

Home care management for low risk neutropenic sepsis

This leaflet is for patients receiving cancer treatments who have low risk neutropenic sepsis.

What is neutropenic sepsis?

Chemotherapy and other cancer treatments can stop the bone marrow producing the white blood cells that fight infection. This can be dangerous, as infections can have a much greater effect, sometimes resulting in a more severe infection with bacteria found in the blood (septicaemia or sepsis). Septicaemia which occurs when blood counts are low is called *neutropenic sepsis*. For this reason, we ask patients receiving chemotherapy to contact us quickly or come into the hospital so that their blood counts can be checked if they are unwell or have a temperature.

What happens next?

Once a patient comes to hospital, they have antibiotics and investigations. They are then assessed and if they are 'high risk', they need to remain in hospital for intravenous treatment and monitoring. Patients should always bring their 'alert card' or chemotherapy book with them. Those that are 'low risk' can be discharged from hospital with an antibiotic prescription but must be kept under daily telephone review to ensure they are improving.

If you need to speak with the acute oncology nurses please ring 07775 006062.

Managing low risk neutropenic sepsis at home

You have found to be at low risk and can go home on oral antibiotics. In order for it to be safe to send you home, we need you to agree to the following:

- 1) I agree to be contacted daily by the cancer nursing team to check that I am still feeling alright and to answer some simple questions. This will be between 9am-10am every day.
- 2) I will provide a contact telephone number on which you can speak to me (and a further emergency contact).
- 3) I will return to the hospital if directed to do so.
- 4) I agree to take antibiotic tablets as directed by the doctor or nurse who discharged me.
- 5) That I contact the emergency chemotherapy number if I begin to feel unwell, or come straight back to hospital via the Emergency Department (A&E).
- 6) That I check my temperature before 9am every morning, or anytime if I feel unwell.

My contact number is: _____

My emergency contact is: _____

I agree to be contacted as part of this scheme and will make myself available between 9am and 12am every day while I am on antibiotic tablets for low risk neutropenic sepsis

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

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PATIENT COPY – PLEASE GIVE PATIENT SIGNED COPY TO TAKE HOME