

The Lilac Centre/ Ward 2A

Patient Information Leaflet

This leaflet can be made available
in alternative languages / formats on request.

*如有需要，本传单可提供其他语言/版式
此單張的其他語言/格式版本可按要求提供*

Na żądanie ta ulotka może zostać udostępniona
w innych językach/formatach.

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Personal Details

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel: _____

Date of birth: _____

Lilac Centre Tel: 01744 646170

Important - Please Read Carefully

- Carry this booklet with you at all times
- Show it to your GP, dentist or chemist before you receive any treatment or medication
- If you feel unwell or have a high temperature, please contact us straight away (refer to page 6).

Introduction

This booklet is designed to give you any relevant information about your care and treatment whilst having chemotherapy or other treatments both as a day patient on the Lilac Centre, St Helens Hospital or as an inpatient on Ward 2A, Whiston Hospital.

We hope that this booklet will help reduce any fears or anxieties you may be feeling when starting your treatment on the Lilac Centre.

The Lilac Centre

The Lilac Centre is based in St Helens Hospital. It is here that your treatment will be administered.

The time of your stay in the centre will depend on what type of treatment you are having. If your treatment involves having an intravenous infusion (drip), you are able to sit in a comfortable lounge area, watch TV, listen to music or read a magazine. Free beverages and a light lunch of sandwiches will be provided between 12 noon and 1pm.

The Lilac Centre opens at 8am until 8pm, Monday to Friday.

Telephone advice is available between 9am to 5pm.

We are closed on all Bank Holidays

It is possible to attend the centre if you need to have a blood or platelet transfusion.

Triage Helpline

The Lilac Centre, the Haematology Ward - 2A (based at Whiston Hospital) and Clatterbridge Cancer Centre work closely together and provide a **24 hour advice line**. You will be encouraged to use this service, particularly if you suddenly feel unwell or your temperature is raised. You may be advised to go to A&E. Please take your alert card with you.

The contact numbers are:-

Lilac Centre 01744 646170 9am to 5pm.

For out of hours - 5pm to 9am, weekends and bank holidays, please contact:-

- Ward 2A (Haematology patients) 0151 430 1560
- Clatterbridge Cancer Centre (oncology patients) 0800 169 5555

If you need to go to A&E, please take your chemotherapy alert card with you and show it to the triage nurse and receptionist.

Inpatient Facilities

If you become unwell, you may be admitted to Whiston Hospital. The acute oncology advanced nurse practitioners or haematology clinical nurse specialists may visit you and be involved in your care, in partnership with the ward team. They will inform your consultant and the Lilac Centre and advise you of your treatment plan before discharge.

There is a day unit, attached to Ward 2A, which you may be asked to attend for assessment if you are unwell during your treatment.

Flowers

Research has shown that fresh flowers are a source of infection. Therefore, we respectfully ask you not to bring them into the Lilac Centre or Ward 2A please.

Other Support Services

Specialist Nurses

St Helens and Knowsley Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust aims to ensure all cancer patients have access to a key worker (Nurse Specialist). In addition, the Lilac Centre has Acute Oncology Advanced Nurse Practitioners who work with your specialist team and can provide expert chemotherapy advice and support.

Counselling Service

The Lilac Centre offers a free counselling service for patients and their families or carers, who are experiencing difficulties relating to their illness. It is important to know that you can rely on strict confidentiality. This is discussed in more detail during the initial meeting with your counsellor.

Complementary Therapies

These can promote a feeling of wellbeing and help reduce stress levels by creating a feeling of soothing relaxation. The Lilac Centre has highly trained and qualified therapists who provide an excellent service. For more information, please discuss this with your chemotherapy nurse.

Macmillan Information Centre

Please visit the centre based on the lower ground floor of St Helens Hospital. This service offers support and information for all patients affected by cancer, their relatives, friends and carers.

Spiritual Care

Representatives of different denominations are available. If you wish to see one of the chaplains, please ask the nursing staff to contact them. There is a Sanctuary within both Whiston and St Helens hospitals. For further information on spiritual care services, please speak to a member of staff or contact the department directly on **0151 430 1657**.

District Nurse

If you require a District Nurse when you go home, this will be arranged by the nursing staff.

Palliative Support Team

This specialised team provide advice and treatment for symptom control. They provide emotional support and information to you and your family. Your chemotherapy nurse can refer you to this service.

Dietician

If you require a dietician for advice regarding nutritional support, a referral to this service can be organised by a chemotherapy nurse.

Clinical Trials

Some patients who attend the Lilac Centre or Ward 2A for treatment, participate in research or clinical trials. Your consultant will identify if this is appropriate for you. The research and trials are carried out under strict ethically controlled conditions so that the safety and wellbeing of patients is maintained at all times. If you have any queries about clinical trials, please ask at your next clinic appointment.

Transport

Patients are encouraged to arrange their own transport to and from the hospital. However, in certain circumstances, an ambulance can be arranged. Please speak to staff if you have any transport difficulties. We require a minimum of 48 hours to organise transport.

Pre Treatment Assessment (usually shorted to Pre-Assessment)

Prior to your first chemotherapy, or other treatment, you will be given a pre-assessment appointment. It is an opportunity for the nursing team to introduce themselves and to get to know you. We will discuss with you how you are feeling before your treatment starts and try to ensure we make a plan of how we can support you through your chemotherapy journey. We will answer any questions you may have about your treatment and make sure that you have the relevant information to manage any possible treatment side effects. This appointment may last 45 minutes and may include blood tests, observations of blood pressure, pulse, weight and a urine test. You will also be given a chemotherapy alert card with contact numbers on.

Side effects of cytotoxic chemotherapy or other related treatments can vary according to both the drugs used and the individual. It is important not to anticipate side effects, but to be aware of the possibility of experiencing them. You will be given specific information related to the treatment you are receiving by a chemotherapy nurse.

During the appointment you will also be shown around the Lilac Centre. You are welcome to bring your family to the first visit.

Treatment And Its Side Effects

Chemotherapy

Chemotherapy simply means drug treatment. The drugs we give to treat cancer are called cytotoxic and the purpose is to kill cancer cells, or to stop them dividing abnormally. The drugs are usually given by injection (ie drip) or tablet form. You must have signed a consent form before starting treatments. This is usually done in the outpatient clinic.

Possible Side Effects Are:

1) Fever/High Temperature (Risk of Neutropenic Sepsis (Serious Infection))

A normal temperature is 37 °C. We strongly advise you to take your temperature every day.

If the reading is 37.5°C or above, ring your triage help line without delay. This is important as infection can quickly lead to sepsis (a serious infection which, in rare cases, is fatal) and needs treating quickly.

You may be asked to attend the Lilac Centre, Ward 2A day unit, A&E or your GP. This will depend on your symptoms. **Please take your chemotherapy alert card with you.**

2) Nausea and Vomiting

You may experience nausea and vomiting. Sometimes the sickness may last just a few hours, or in severe cases, it could last for several days.

When having your chemotherapy treatment an anti-sickness drug will be given to you either intravenously or orally. You may also be given tablets to take home with you.

If you find that the anti-sickness medication is not effective, please let us know as there is always an alternative.

3) Diarrhoea and Constipation

Please inform the chemotherapy nurses if you experience any change in bowel habit. The appropriate treatment and advice can be offered.

4) Tiredness

Tiredness is a common side effect which affects many people having chemotherapy or other treatments. If this is a problem, please discuss with a chemotherapy nurse.

5) Altered Blood Count

Chemotherapy may cause some blood cell levels to fall temporarily. You will have your blood tested before each treatment to make sure they are at adequate levels. If your blood count is low your treatment may be delayed until your blood count recovers. There is nothing you can do to prevent this from happening, but please be aware of possible symptoms:

- a) Your white blood cells help to fight infection. If these are low you are at a higher risk of developing an infection (ie sore throat, chest infection, flu like symptoms). **Please monitor your temperature.**
- b) Your red blood cells carry oxygen around your body. If these are low you may feel very tired or breathless on exertion. You may be anaemic and require a blood transfusion.
- c) Your platelets help your blood to clot. If these are low, you may notice unusual bruising or bleeding.

If you experience any of the above symptoms, please contact the triage help line. **The contact numbers are on page 3.**

6) Sore Mouth/Taste Alterations

Some chemotherapy drugs can cause a sore mouth or mouth ulcers. Be particularly careful with oral hygiene; brush your teeth with a soft toothbrush and rinse your mouth with a mouth wash, after each meal, if possible. If you do suffer from a sore mouth, please let the nursing staff know.

In some cases the drugs you are given can change your sensation of taste. A metallic taste in the mouth is often complained of and foods just “do not taste the same”. When your treatment has finished, your normal taste sensations will return.

7) Hair Loss

Hair loss may not occur for every patient. This depends on the drug given and the individual reaction to that drug. Hair loss can be a very traumatic side effect of chemotherapy. You will always be told of the possibility of losing your hair and arrangements will be made for you to see a hairdresser who specialises in wigs. It is advisable to see the hairdresser before you start losing your hair.

If you have long hair you may consider having it cut short before the start of your treatment.

Cool cap facilities, which minimise hair loss, are available for some patients.

Please speak to your consultant for more details.

8) Hair Care

For those patients who are not going to lose their hair, there is a possibility your hair may thin or become damaged. We advise you not to colour or perm your hair. We advise you to use a gentle shampoo, for frequent use, and also avoid the use of heated appliances.

9) Fertility

Only certain cytotoxic drugs will make you infertile. Always discuss the possibilities of infertility with your consultant before you start treatment. It is possible for women to get pregnant whilst they or their partners are having treatment. Pregnancy should be avoided during treatment and for a recommended six months after treatment has finished. Depending on the cytotoxic drugs prescribed, some men will be offered the facility of sperm banking and some women will be offered the facility of egg preservation.

The chemotherapy can make you infertile and although some men will find that their sperm count will return to normal, after treatment has finished, this is not guaranteed. You will be given the opportunity to discuss these matters before your chemotherapy treatment begins.

10) Skin Effects

Some chemotherapy treatments cause the skin to become very dry and itchy. Rashes may also occur. Whilst on treatment the skin becomes more sensitive to sunlight than usual, therefore, try and avoid sitting out in the sun. Where this is unavoidable, a high factor sun cream should be used.

11) Urine

Some cytotoxic drugs are bright red or blue in colour. This colour is passed out through the urine for a few hours after the treatment has been given.

12) Leakage into the tissue around the vein (extravasation)

If this happens during an intravenous infusion, the tissue in that area can become damaged.

Tell the nurse immediately if the area around the injection site:

- Stings
- Burns
- Becomes red or swollen

If you are at home, ring the clinic or ward and ask to speak to a chemotherapy nurse.

13) Vein access (option for a central line)

Some treatments are given intravenously. The options are:-

- 1) Cannula - a short thin tube the nurse puts into a vein in your arm or hand.
- 2) Hickman line - a fine tube that goes under the skin of your chest and into a vein close by.

- 3) Implantable port - An implantable port is a thin, soft plastic tube with a rubber disc at the end. They are sometimes called portacaths or subcutaneous ports. They insert the port under the skin, usually on your chest, and the attached tube goes into a vein near the heart. You can see a small bump underneath your skin where the port is.
- 4) PICC line - a fine tube that is put into a vein in your arm and goes up into a vein in your chest.

These devices can provide a great option for patients with poor veins or who need to have a chemotherapy infusion at home. This will be discussed with you and an appointment for insertion arranged, if required.

Other Cancer Treatments Include:

Immunotherapy

Immunotherapy drugs boost the body's immune system to fight cancer cells. Specific side effects will be discussed with you.

Radiotherapy

Radiotherapy uses high energy rays to destroy cancer cells. This treatment aims to treat cancer or relieve symptoms.

Hormonal Treatments

Hormonal therapies work by altering the production or activity of particular hormones in the body. The type of hormone therapy given depends on the type of cancer being treated. There are several different types of hormonal therapy. They are usually given as either tablets or injections. The side effects will vary and depend on the individual drug. General side effects can include tiredness, headaches, feeling sick and muscle/joint aches.

Supportive Treatments

For example blood transfusions to treat anaemia.

General Information

- It is recommended that you do not have more than the occasional drink of alcohol
- Try and live as normal a life as possible
- During treatment women may experience changes to their menstrual cycle
- Always use contraception throughout treatment and for six months after
- There is no evidence that chemotherapy treatment will affect your sexual partner. But there is a small chance that the drug could find its way into your body fluids. Therefore, we advise using barrier contraception (a condom) throughout a course of chemotherapy and for a week or so afterwards.
- Chemotherapy drugs will not have a permanent affect on your sexual performance or your ability to have sex
- We actively encourage people **not** to smoke
- Whiston and St Helens hospitals enforce a No Smoking Policy

- There is a sanctuary at St Helens and Whiston Hospital. All denominations and faiths are welcome
- Some people wish to continue working whilst on treatment. Please discuss this with your consultant. The Macmillan Information and Support Centre may be able to provide advice to help you
- Holidays are sometimes possible as treatment can be adapted to fit around holiday plans
- Car Parking: There are 15 disabled car parking spaces at the entrance to the Lilac Centre. There are also 5 short stay (maximum 3 hours, free of charge) car parking spaces, adjacent to the Lilac Centre. These are not dedicated spaces for Lilac Centre patients so if they are full you can park in the main visitor car parks. For frequent visitors, weekly passes are available for £12. These passes will have unlimited use for a full 7 day period and can be purchased either from General Office between the hours of 9.15 am to 4.45 pm, or from the car park pay machine directly 24 hours a day
- Disabled patients and visitors to the Trust (blue badge holders)
- Frequent outpatient attenders – attending hospital for an appointment at least three times within a month and for an overall period of at least three months. A month being defined as a period of 30 days. (the departments that fall into this category have already been identified)

The Trust has introduced free parking for disabled patients and visitors to the Trust - blue badge holders and frequent outpatient attenders (patients attending hospital for an appointment, at least three times within a month, and for an overall period of at least three months).

Free Prescriptions: If you have cancer, you can apply for a certificate to allow you to get free prescriptions. You can get a form to apply for the certificate from your GP, pharmacy or your cancer clinic. Your GP or hospital doctor will need to sign the form. The certificate lasts for 5 years. You qualify for an exemption certificate if you are receiving treatment for:

- Cancer
- the effects of cancer
- the effects of current or previous cancer treatment

Useful Addresses and Contact Numbers:

Lilac Centre, St Helens Hospital

Open 8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday

Telephone advice 9am to 5pm. Tel: 01744 646170

Please use out of hours numbers outside these hours.

Haematology Ward 2A, Whiston Hospital

5pm to 9am and weekends and bank holidays

Tel: 0151 430 1560

Clatterbridge Cancer Centre

5pm to 9am and weekends and bank holidays

Tel: 0800 169 5555

Lilac Centre Counselling Service, St Helens Hospital

Tel: 01744 646173

Bereavement counselling is also available. For more information, please contact the Lilac Centre or telephone for an appointment.

Acute Oncology Advanced Nurse Practitioners

Tel: 01744 646794

Haematology Clinical Nurse Specialists

Tel: 01744 646796

Clinical Trials Team

Tel: 01744 646803

Hairdresser

Tel: 01744 646242 or 07887454230

Macmillan Cancer Support and Information Centre, St Helens Hospital

Tel: 01744 647000. Email: macmillansupport@sthk.nhs.uk. They can provide a variety of information, including local support groups, benefit agencies and general information

St Helens Gateway

Tel: 01744 740803

www.sthelensgateway.info

They offer information on a variety of issues

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Your Diagnosis and Treatment:

Planned Number of Cycles:

Drug Allergies:

Start Date and Time:

Who to contact when your treatment has finished:



Whiston Hospital
Warrington Road,
Prescot, Merseyside, L35 5DR
Telephone: 0151 426 1600

St Helens Hospital
Marshall Cross Road,
St Helens, Merseyside, WA9 3DA
Telephone: 01744 26633

Twitter and Facebook
@mwlhhs
www.merseywestlancs.nhs.uk