

Chemotherapy: Frequently Asked Questions

Where will I have chemotherapy treatment?

The Albury Wodonga Health Chemotherapy Day Unit is located at the Albury campus, on the corner of Borella Rd and East St, Albury. The entrance to the Unit is to the left of the main entrance to the Albury hospital. For your first appointment, please report to the oncology reception area which is through the oncology/after hour's clinic doors, and is the 4th door on the left. For your next visits, you will be able to enter the treatment room where the nurses will direct you to the waiting room or into a treatment chair.

Our Chemotherapy Day Unit is an open plan space which is shared with other patients having chemotherapy for quality and safety reasons.

Your pre-chemotherapy education session

Before you commence your treatment, we strongly encourage you to attend one of our group education sessions run by our specialist chemotherapy nurses in the Chemotherapy Day Unit. These sessions are free, and held each Thursday at 3-4pm with no appointment necessary. At this time, the nurse will show you around the chemotherapy unit, introduce you to our staff and provide some general information about chemotherapy treatment and what to expect. This group session provides the opportunity to ask any questions you may have before your actual treatment day.

Your first chemotherapy visit

Upon arrival, a staff member will help you complete any necessary paperwork. Before treatment starts you will have a private appointment with one of the chemotherapy nurses to discuss the details of your treatment and answer any further questions you may have. The nurse will talk to you about your specific treatment and what side effects you may experience and give you information about how to manage these side effects. The nurse will undertake some baseline assessments such as blood pressure, and will ask you about any other supports you need. 3-5 days after your first visit, you will receive a phone call from one of the nurses to check how you are progressing after your treatment.

Can I bring someone with me?

You are very welcome to bring one friend, family member or carer with you whilst you receive your treatment. We ask that only one person stays with you as space is limited. If you have more than one person, they can take it in turns sitting with you and are welcome to make use of one of the cafeterias or waiting room. Chemotherapy treatment time depends on the treatment you are having. Usually it is a same day procedure, but for some treatments you will need to stay overnight in the hospital. Your doctor or nurse will be able to provide more information.

Is it painful?

Your chemotherapy should not cause you any pain during the delivery of treatment. If you experience any discomfort or feel in any way different during your treatment, then please notify one of the nursing staff.

How will I feel after chemotherapy?

There may be side effects, which will vary depending on the type of chemotherapy you have received. This will be discussed with you by your doctor and nurse prior to your treatment.

Am I allowed drive after my treatment?

We recommend that you arrange for someone to drive you to and from your appointments. Free parking is available at the hospital.

Can I eat and drink before I come?

There are generally no dietary restrictions or requirements during chemotherapy, unless otherwise told by your doctor or nurse. It is important that you drink plenty of fluids and take your usual medication before your appointment. Bottled water and light snacks and meals are provided and you are welcome to bring your own food and drinks.

What should I wear?

Wear comfortable clothes with loose sleeves. If you have an infusaport (portacath) or Hickmans catheter please wear clothes that allow easy access to your chest. Some people feel cold when they are receiving treatment, so it's a good idea to bring something warm with you.

What should I bring?

We recommend that you bring a list of any medications and any over the counter preparations that you may be taking. We do provide a large range of magazines and there are DVD players available. You are able to use electronic devices such as mobile phones/laptops/iPods/iPads whilst receiving treatment, although please note that there is no free wireless internet. It is important that you are considerate of other patients if using such devices and keep noise to a minimum.

Will there be a cost for my treatment?

Although there is no cost for receiving treatment in the chemotherapy unit, it is likely that there will be a cost for the medication you receive. Medication costs vary depending on your specific treatment. Medications are supplied by Terry White chemist, Dean Street Albury, and an invoice will be sent to you at the beginning of each month following treatment. The oncology pharmacists at Terry White can be contacted on 02 6021 2714 if you have any queries. Specific costs, along with PBS Safety Net information will be discussed with you by the oncology nurse at your first treatment session. It is important to tell the nurse if you might be experiencing financial difficulty as there are supports that may be able to assist you.

Where can I find out more, including support group information?

For more information and support, please contact:

- Cancer Council Australia **P:** 13 11 20 www.cancer.org.au or
- Hume Regional Integrated Cancer Service **P:** (02) 6057 5200 www.humerics.org.au