

**Patient
Information**

Having chemotherapy through an ambulatory pump

Introduction

This leaflet gives you information about using your ambulatory pump which is giving you chemotherapy. Using this pump means that you can continue chemotherapy treatment at home.

Please read this leaflet and keep it in a safe place so that you can read it again if you need to.

If you have any concerns or need more advice please contact the Chemotherapy Helpline in the Oncology Unit, Cheltenham General Hospital. If you live in Hereford contact the Macmillan Renton Unit during normal working hours. Out of hours please contact the Chemotherapy Helpline in Cheltenham. You will find the telephone numbers listed on the last page of this leaflet.

Ambulatory pump information

Ambulatory pumps vary in shape and size depending on the make and also on the length of your treatment.



Figure 1: An image of an ambulatory pump

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Department

Oncology

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Inside the ambulatory pump is a soft balloon containing the chemotherapy. The tubing from the pump is attached via a connector which goes into your arm or chest. This must always be connected and disconnected by an experienced nurse.

The pump is light weight and fits easily into a small bag or pouch. It can then be carried around your waist, or attached to a belt or belt loop with a clip. The length of time that the pump will be connected will depend upon which chemotherapy treatment you are having. The shortest length of time for having this treatment is 46 hours, but it can be up to 1 week in some cases.

- We ask that you check your Ambulatory pump to make sure that your chemotherapy is flowing. You will be able to find this out by looking at the pump to see if the balloon is getting smaller in size. There should be no kinks or twists in the tubing from the ambulatory device, as this could restrict the flow of the chemotherapy. If there is a clamp on the tubing or infusion line, please make sure it is open. The connector will be positioned directly on your skin, as this gives the best flow.
- You should keep the pump at waist level; raising or lowering the pump may affect the flow rate. During sleep the recommended position is on top of the bed covers or placed on a table beside the bed. Note that if the pump is close to heat pads, placed under covers or under pillows, the pump may become too warm and this could affect the flow rate. If placed near cold packs/ice or exposed to the cold, this could also have an effect on the flow rate.
- Always protect the pump from sunlight, as exposure could affect the quality of the chemotherapy.
- If the pump gets dropped, please make sure you have not got any leaks or damage to the pump or the tubing. If there is damage or if it is leaking, please use the Spillage kit and follow the instructions in this leaflet under the section; **Action to take if a leakage occurs from your pump**, and seek professional advice from the chemotherapy helpline immediately.
- Keep the pump and tubing away from sharp objects and take extra care if handling pets, due to the risk of knocking it out of position.

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- Do not put the pump in water. Keep the pump outside the shower or bath, by placing in a waterproof bag or sleeve, and covering the filter if there is one. Your nurse will tell you if there is a filter in place. While bathing or showering, make sure the pump stays at waist level; this will help to prevent any problems with the flow rate.
- If there is a filter on the tubing of the ambulatory pump, do not cover with tape, as this may interfere with the flow.
- If travelling on an aeroplane with an Ambulatory pump there should be no problems in a pressurized passenger cabin.
- After having treatment at the chemotherapy unit please make sure that you always leave with a yellow chemotherapy bin and disconnection/dressing packs to give to your district nurses.

Spillage kit

Leakage from your pump is very rare, but if this does happen, a chemotherapy spillage needs immediate attention.

You will have been given a 'Spillage kit' which contains:

- 2 large absorbent sheets
- 2 plastic aprons
- 2 pair's disposable gloves
- 2 orange bags
- 1 clamp

Action to take if you have a leakage from your pump

- Open your 'Spillage kit'
- Put on the **2 pairs** of gloves and the apron **before** touching the carrying pouch which holds the bottle of chemotherapy
- Lay the absorbent sheet on a flat surface
- Take the bottle from the carrying pouch, being careful to hold it over the absorbent sheet
- Put the clamp onto the tubing to seal off the chemotherapy liquid
- Wrap the pump in the absorbent sheet
- Place it into the orange bag provided
- **Do not** disconnect the pump line from the line in your arm or chest
- **Contact the Chemotherapy Helpline.**

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Action to take if your skin is contaminated

- Open your 'Spillage kit' and put on the **2 pairs** of gloves.
- Wash your skin with plenty of cool, soapy water.
- Take off any clothes that have been splashed and machine wash at 60 degrees.
- Take off the gloves and apron and place them inside the orange bag provided.
- Close the plastic bag and dispose of it in a yellow chemotherapy bin, making sure it is tightly closed and take it back to your chemotherapy centre.
- Wash your hands with plenty of cool, soapy water.

Action to take if chemotherapy spills onto your furniture or floor

- Put on the **2 pairs** of gloves and the apron from the 'Spillage Kit' before touching the carrying pouch which holds the bottle of chemotherapy.
- With gloved hands, place the absorbent sheet over the affected area to soak up the spillage and to stop the spill from spreading.
- Clean the splashed furniture/floor at least 3 times with hot soapy water.
- Place all absorbent sheets, gloves and any materials used to clean up the spillage inside the orange bag provided.
- Close the orange bag. This orange bag **must** be placed into the yellow chemotherapy bin provided and taken back to your Oncology Centre. Orange bags or items exposed to chemotherapy **must not** be placed in a domestic waste/dustbin, in order to comply with waste regulations.
- Wash your hands with plenty of cool, soapy water

For further advice please contact the Chemotherapy Helpline. The details are set out below.

Contact information

Chemotherapy Helpline
Cheltenham Oncology Centre
Tel: 03004 223444 (24hrs)

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Macmillan Renton Unit

Hereford County Hospital

Tel: 01432 264 000

Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 5:00pm

Out of these hours calls will divert to Cheltenham Oncology
Centre.

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