

For patients taking oral cancer drugs

What you should know about taking oral cancer drugs:

- Do not crush, split, break or chew your oral cancer drugs.
- Ask your health care team what to do if you miss a dose.
- Call the cancer centre if you do not know how to take your cancer drugs (519-749-4300 ext. 4380).

How to store and handle your oral cancer drugs:

- Store in a cool, dry place.
- Keep away from food and drinks.
- Keep out of reach of children and pets.
- Keep oral cancer drugs in the container from the pharmacy.
- Do not mix oral cancer drugs in containers with other drugs.
- Caregivers should wear disposable gloves if they need to help you take the oral cancer drug.
- When you touch your oral cancer drug, wash your hands with soap and water.

How to get rid of your pills safely:

- Do not flush down the toilet or throw in the garbage.
- Return any unused cancer drugs or cancer drug bottles to your local **hospital pharmacy**. Empty pill bottles should not be recycled.



Waterloo Wellington
Regional Cancer Program
in partnership with Cancer Care Ontario

Grand River Regional Cancer Centre

835 King Street West, Kitchener, ON
www.grhosp.on.ca/CancerProgram



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What you need to know to stay safe at home

Why is safety important?

Oral cancer drugs are pills that you swallow. They are just as strong and work just as well as IV drugs.

Cancer drugs kill cancer cells but can also damage normal cells.

Follow the instructions below to keep everyone safe by knowing how to handle oral cancer drugs and personal body fluids.

How to handle body fluids while taking oral cancer drugs?

- Oral cancer drugs stay in your body fluids for **48 hours**.
- During this time your urine (pee), bowel movements (poo), vomit, blood, vaginal fluids and sperm contain cancer drugs.
- Store garbage that contains body fluids in a safe place away from pets and children.
- Use a plastic cover on your mattress for easier spill cleanup.

Pregnant women, or women who are breastfeeding should not handle cancer drugs or body fluids from someone who is taking a cancer drug. Cancer drugs may cause birth defects, and can be passed through breast milk to babies.

How to handle body fluids while taking oral cancer drugs:

- Wear gloves and use paper towels. Throw away after use.
- After cleaning, wash your hands with soap and water.
- Flush body fluids down the toilet. Flush a second time.

How to cleanup different body fluids at home

Cleaning up spills of body fluid	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wash surfaces with soap and water• Put used paper towel in a plastic bag and tie it up• Put this bag inside another plastic bag and tie that up (called 'double bagging')• Throw the bags in your home garbage
Getting rid of other body fluids	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 'Double bag' any incontinence pads, disposable briefs, catheter bags or stoma bags• Throw the bag in your home garbage• Wash bedpan or urinal with soapy water
Washing clothing or bedding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wash any clothing or bedding right away• Wash them 2 times in hot, soapy water• Do not wash with other clothes or laundry
Vomiting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If you use a bowl, empty it into the toilet• Wash the bowl with soap and water
Going to the toilet	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sit down to use the toilet• Close the lid when you flush
Having sex	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use a condom to protect your partner

eviQ. (2016). Chemotherapy Safety at Home [Pamphlet]. Retrieved from <https://www.eviq.org.au/patients-and-carers/patient-information-sheets/3095-chemotherapy-safety-at-home>