



Urological Associates, P.C.

of the Iowa and Illinois Quad-Cities Region

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Intravesical Chemotherapy Treatment

Your doctor has recommended/ordered intravesical chemotherapy. This handout will describe what you need to know.

What is it?

Intravesical Chemotherapy describes any medication that is put into your bladder to kill tumor cells. The medication coats the lining of your bladder and stops the growth/division of the tumor cells. While it damages the tumor cells, it does little to your normal bladder cells. At Urological Associates the medicine we use is either Mitomycin or Gemcitabine.

Because the chemotherapy is **NOT** injected into your blood, you will **NOT** experience the typical chemotherapy side effects of hair loss, nausea, vomiting, and weight loss.

When is it given?

Typically, it is given same day after a Transurethral Resection of the Bladder Tumor (TURBT).

It can also be given in weekly treatment sessions, typically three or six doses. This is not as common, but does occur in patients whose bladder cancer returns quickly after initial treatment or who do not tolerate Bacillus Calmette Guerin (BCG) well. During weekly treatments, your urine will be tested before each treatment to determine if you have a urinary tract infection. Please inform the nurse of any changes in your urinary pattern, blood in your urine, if you have a fever, and/or if you are not feeling well.

How is it given?

The intravesical chemotherapy is instilled into the bladder via a urinary catheter. It's about two ounces of fluid. The medication is held in the bladder for one hour.

If you are post-TURBT, the catheter placed during surgery will be plugged and you will remain in the office for the hour long hold and subsequent irrigation. After the hour hold, your bladder will be drained and a liter of normal saline will be irrigated through your bladder. After the irrigation, the catheter may be removed depending on your doctor's order. Either way, you will be sent home. If the catheter is to remain in place, you will be scheduled for removal within two weeks. Plan to be in the office for approximately 90 minutes.

If you are doing this as a weekly session, after instillation of the chemotherapy, the catheter will be removed, and you will be sent home. After the hour hold, you will void normally – men, please sit to avoid splashing. The toilet will need to be flushed twice after this first void.

Side Effects:

Most people tolerate intravesical chemotherapy very well although signs and symptoms of an irritated bladder are to be expected. If you experience the symptoms below for more than 48 hours, please call the office.

- Bladder Spasms.
- Discomfort/burning when voiding.
- Increase in frequency.
- Increase in urgency.
- Blood in your urine.

Very rarely you may experience a rash. The rash can occur anywhere on your body but typically occurs on the soles of your feet, palms of your hands, and/or the trunk of your body. Please call the office if you experience a rash. If the rash is accompanied by shortness of breath or throat swelling go to the nearest emergency room.

It is important to drink plenty of hydrating fluids after your treatment. Drink an additional 24-48oz of hydrating fluids (mostly water) **above** your normal fluid intake for the next two days. This will help to flush out the bladder. Frequent filling and emptying of your bladder will help prevent bladder issues.

Good to know:

If you have any leaking of the medication prior to the draining of the chemotherapy, it is important the area be cleaned with hot soapy water. This goes for your body as well. We recommend a shower if any of the chemotherapy touches your skin.

It is important to limit the amount of fluid you take in prior to your treatment; we recommend limiting fluid intake two hours prior to your appointment. If you drink too much, the chemotherapy will be diluted and it won't be as effective. Plus, you will be uncomfortable due to the distention of your bladder. As such, if you are in the office after your TURBT we will not be able to offer you anything to drink.

Additionally, please sit to void for eight hours after the treatment. This will prevent the chemotherapy from splashing. If you have a catheter, empty the bag carefully.

Because chemotherapy can damage sperm and/or a baby, please use birth control during your treatment and for six months after finishing. For men this means use of condom. For women, no breastfeeding. If you do become pregnant, please call the office.

Please limit your alcohol intake to two servings for the first 24 hours after treatment.

Tell your other providers you are receiving intravesical chemotherapy prior to any other treatments.

Please call the office with any questions or concerns!