

# **Your Guide to Bladder Instillation Treatment: Procedures, Infusions & Tests**

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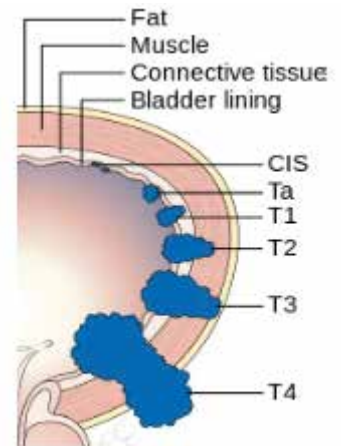
**Introduction:** The material in this booklet contains information important for your treatment, for example symptoms to expect and when to go to a doctor. This information will be reviewed with you before your treatment. If you have ANY questions or concerns about your treatment, please ask your Cancer Care Team.

## Categories of Bladder Cancer

You have been diagnosed with bladder cancer and your treatment is described in this booklet.

There are 2 main categories for bladder cancer:

1. Invasive - the cancer has spread into the muscle layer and beyond. The deeper the cancer grows into the bladder wall, the more difficult it is to treat. For this reason, it is important to diagnose and treat the disease at an early stage.
2. Non-muscle invasive bladder cancer (NMIBC) - the cancer is found on the inner layer of the bladder. About 8 out of 10 new patients have this type of tumor.



*Wikipedia*

**This booklet focuses on treatment for NMIBC.**

## Types of NMIBC

There are 2 types of NMIBC. They can happen on their own or in combination with each other:

- Papillary tumours - these are finger-like tumours. They have a stem that attaches them to the inner layer of the bladder. They often grow toward the center or hollow part of the bladder without growing into the deeper layers.
- Carcinoma in situ (CIS) - these tumours run flat along the lining of the bladder.

## How is NMIBC treated?

Superficial bladder cancer can be treated by putting medications directly into the bladder. This is called **bladder instillation** or **intravesical therapy**. The medications work on the tumour cells on the inner lining of the bladder and help keep the cancer from coming back (**recurrence**). It is a treatment often used after surgery.

There are two different types of medications that can be used:

### **1. Immunotherapy**

Your own body's immune system cells switch on to affect cancer cells that may be left in your bladder and help stop new tumours from growing. This is called Immunotherapy. You will usually get weekly treatments for 6 weeks and your doctor will decide about future treatments.

BCG (Bacillus Calmette–Guérin) is an immunotherapy made from an inactive form of tuberculosis bacteria. You cannot contract tuberculosis from this treatment. When BCG is placed in your bladder, it starts to irritate the cells in the bladder lining. This attracts immune cells to your bladder which attack the cancer cells.

### **2. Chemotherapy**

Chemotherapy is the use of certain drugs to destroy cancer cells or to prevent new cancer cells from growing. It is also known as “chemo.” Chemotherapy that is put into the bladder, instead of injecting it into the bloodstream has a direct effect on the bladder and has minimal side effects.

There are several different chemotherapy drugs used to treat bladder cancer:

- Mitomycin
- Epirubicin
- Gemcitabine
- Docetaxel

### **What should I know before I take this medication?**

There are some things that can affect how well the treatment will work for you. Make sure you tell your doctor or nurse every time if you:

- have any allergies
- might be, or are, pregnant or breastfeeding
- were recently immunized such as a COVID vaccination or tetanus shot
- were recently on, or are on antibiotics now
- have blood in your urine or pain when urinating
- get infections often
- have an immune system deficiency such as HIV/AIDS or are taking immunosuppressive treatment such as steroids
- are taking blood thinners

### **Medication Interactions**

Some medications may interfere with the effectiveness of your treatment. Do not start taking new medications or herbal products without checking with your doctor or pharmacist. Tell your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist if you are taking any other prescription or nonprescription medicines, vitamins, or herbal products.

## **Preparing For Treatment**

### **Can I eat before I come in for my treatment?**

Yes. Eat a good breakfast, lunch or both before you come for your treatment. Food will not affect your treatment.

### **Can I drink anything before my treatment?**

Drink only small amounts of fluid starting 4 hours before your treatment. We need your bladder to be as empty as possible when you come for your treatment. During your treatment, we prefer that you do not drink anything, as you will need to wait to urinate until after your treatment is over, which can be up to 2 hours.

**Do not** drink coffee or caffeine drinks the day of your treatment. These drinks can irritate your bladder and make you feel like you have to urinate more often or may make you feel more uncomfortable after your treatment.

### **I am diabetic. Am I allowed to take my diabetes medication?**

Yes. Take your insulin or diabetes pills just like normal. If you take pills, take them with sips of water. Be sure to eat as you normally do.

### **Am I allowed to take my other regular medications?**

Yes. Take your pills at your normal times with sips of water.

**Do not** take a “water pill” or diuretic, such as furosemide (Lasix®), until you urinate after your treatment. If you usually take your water pill first thing in the morning, it will be hard for you to hold the medication in your bladder for the recommended time.

### **How long will my appointments be?**

The length of treatment depends on the type of medication you are getting. Ask your nurse to estimate the time for you.

### **What happens during my treatment?**

When you arrive for your treatment, a nurse will insert a thin tube (a catheter) into your bladder which will be used to give you your medication. This only takes a few minutes and usually the catheter is removed after the medication is in. However, it may be left in place until the end of your treatment.

**Try to hold the medication for the entire time you are instructed to. If you currently have bladder leakage or incontinence, please talk to your nurse or doctor before treatment.**

## **What to do after treatment**

### **When can I start to drink fluids?**

Hold the medication for as long as you can (the entire treatment time is best). After you urinate the first time, you may start drinking fluids again.

### **When can I go back to my normal activities?**

You can restart your regular activities (such as driving a car, walking) right after your treatment. Listen to your body; if you feel tired during any activity, slow down and rest.

## Safety At Home

### Why do I need to be careful at home?

The medication in your bladder will leave your body through your urine. If people or pets come in contact with affected waste or fluids, it can be harmful, and they could also get side effects. See pages 6-7 for the safety precautions you need to follow for 6 hours after you finish each treatment.

### Is it safe to have contact with others when I am taking these treatments?

Yes. Being with your loved ones is important. Eating together, enjoying favorite activities, hugging and kissing are all safe.

### Is it safe to be sexually active?

Yes, after the time period has passed.

Follow these instructions:

- Do not have sexual intercourse at all for **24 hours after your treatment**.
- After 24 hours, wear condoms for 1 week after **each** treatment.
- You and your partner should also **avoid getting pregnant** during treatment. Your health care team may give you more information.

### Is it safe to breast feed?

No. It is not safe to breast feed while on this treatment.

### Safe Handling of Waste and Body Fluids

It's important to follow the instructions for **Safe Handling of Waste and Body Fluids** during your treatment and for **6 hours** after you finish each treatment.

### Using the toilet:

- It is safe to use the same toilet (septic or city sewage) as other people.
- It is important to sit when using the toilet to avoid urine from splashing.

BCG	Chemotherapy & Interferon
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• After you urinate, pour half a cup of liquid household bleach into the toilet, put the lid down and <b>wait 20 minutes</b>, then flush the toilet once.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• After you urinate, put the lid down and flush the toilet twice right away.</li></ul>

- Wash any skin that touched urine with water and mild soap. If you use incontinence products, try to change your pads often and wash the skin after each pad change.
- Wash your hands well with soap and water.
- Use your own hand towel or paper towel. Do not share hand towels with other people.
- To clean any urine drips or spills, follow the instructions in the next section.
- If you have an ileostomy or colostomy, the same instructions apply.

**How do I clean up body waste and fluids which aren't managed in a toilet? (Bed pan, incontinence products, accidental urine spill)**

Always wear disposable gloves. Disposable nitrile gloves offer the best protection when you're handling body fluids and waste. You can buy them at your local pharmacy.

- Dump any waste or fluids into the toilet and follow the procedure above for using the toilet.
- Use paper towels, toilet paper or disposable absorbent pads to soak up as much of the waste and fluids as possible.
- See below for instructions on how to dispose of the garbage.
- Wash the area well.

BCG	Chemotherapy & Interferon
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mix 1 tbsp (15 mL) of liquid household bleach with 1 cup (250 mL) of water in a spray bottle.</li><li>• Spray the surface that has come in contact with urine.</li><li>• Leave the bleach mixture on the affected area for 20 minutes.</li><li>• Clean the area with soap and water.</li><li>• Wash your hands well with soap and water.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Wash the area well with soap and water 3 times.</li><li>• Clean any waste on the toilet with soap and water including the lid and handle.</li></ul>

**What do I do with soiled laundry that has come in contact with your body fluids?**

- Wear disposable gloves when handling the soiled laundry.
- Wash them separately from other clothes and linens at high temperature.
- If you are taking BCG treatment, it is best to add a tablespoon of bleach to the laundry water.
- Wash through 2 complete washing machine cycles before you wear or use them again.

**What do I do with the garbage?**

- Anything that may have come in contact with your body fluids must be handled with care. Wear gloves when you handle anything soiled.
- Remove and throw away your gloves. Wash your hands well with soap and water.
- Put things you cannot flush down the toilet (including gloves or incontinence products) in a garbage bag and tie it tightly. Put this bag in a second garbage bag and tie it tightly.
- Once the garbage is double-bagged, you can throw it out with your regular garbage.
- Keep garbage out of reach of children and pets.

## Side Effects

Side effects are different depending on the type of medication you have. Review the drug-specific side effects below for information on what to watch for and how to manage them. You may experience some or many of these side effects.

### BCG Treatment


Common Side Effects	What to do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frequent urination or pain and burning when urinating.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>After your treatment, drink lots of fluids and empty your bladder often.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flu-like symptoms (headaches, chills, muscle aches and fatigue) which may occur a few hours after treatment and last for 24 - 48 hours.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rest in bed as needed.</li> <li>Take acetaminophen (such as Tylenol®) regularly if needed for minor aches and pains.</li> <li>If flu-like symptoms are not relieved by acetaminophen (plain Tylenol®) or last longer than <b>48 hours</b> contact your doctor or nurse.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Small amounts of blood clots may appear in the urine for 24-48 hours after treatment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact your urologist if you have more than small amounts of blood or clots that last more than <b>24 hours</b>.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Signs of infection including fever and chills.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take acetaminophen (such as Tylenol®) regularly for fever.</li> <li>If fever is greater than 38°C (100°F) or lasts more than <b>48 hours</b> contact your urologist or nurse.</li> </ul>

### Chemotherapy (Mitomycin, Epirubicin, Gemcitabine or Docetaxel)

Common Side Effects	What to do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frequent urination or pain and burning when urinating.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>After your treatment, drink lots of fluids and empty your bladder often.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bladder spasm, abdominal cramping, difficulty passing urine.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact your urologist if this is severe or ongoing.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Small amounts of blood clots may appear in the urine for 24-48 hours after treatment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact your urologist if you have more than small amounts of blood or clots that last more than <b>24 hours</b>.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Signs of infection including fever and chills.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact your urologist right away if your fever is above 38°C.</li> </ul>

Common Side Effects	What to do
<p><b>*Docetaxel only:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other symptoms you may experience include facial flushing or warmth, mild nausea and rarely, skin rash.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report these to your health care team immediately</li> </ul>

Contact your health care team at the number they provided you if you have any questions or concerns.

 **Before each treatment, tell your nurse if you have:**

- A fever — you may have an infection
- Immune system problems
- A urinary tract infection
- Pain when urinating
- Had blood or blood clots in your urine since your last treatment
- Any new medical problems

**Tell your nurse if you had a fever, chills or felt unusually tired after your last treatment.**

**Tobacco Use: Considerations During your Treatment**

Continuing to use tobacco products (pipe, cigar, cigarettes, snuff) after a cancer diagnosis may lower your response to treatment, increase your risk of problems from treatment, slow healing and may impact your overall survival. Stopping tobacco use is one of the best things you can do for yourself and your family. For more information and support to stop or reduce your tobacco use, please talk to your health care team and visit their website.

- › Website: <https://tobaccofree.novascotia.ca/>

**Support Services**

Cancer affects more than your body. It has an impact on many parts of your life. Many people with cancer find that talking with someone can be very helpful to cope with emotional, practical, psychological and spiritual concerns.

If you'd like to talk to someone please contact your health care team or ask to be referred to a Cancer Patient Navigator or a Social Worker.

For cancer information and support services visit the NS Health Cancer Care Program's website . To learn more about your type of cancer and for additional resources call the Canadian Cancer Society's Cancer Information Helpline 1-888-939-3333 or visit their website.

- Websites:
  - › Nova Scotia Health Cancer Care Program - [www.nscancercare.ca](http://www.nscancercare.ca)
  - › Canadian Cancer Society - [www.cancer.ca](http://www.cancer.ca)
  - › Bladder Cancer Canada - <https://bladdercancerCanada.org/en/ca>





## When should I contact my Urologist or Treatment Clinic?

If you have these symptoms for longer than 24 hours:

- High fever that won't go away (this may be a sign of an infection)
- Shaking and chills
- Nausea and vomiting
- Headache or dizziness
- Coughing
- Blood in the urine
- Skin rash
- Joint pain
- Severe pain when you urinate
- Any other abnormal condition

Be sure you tell doctors, dentists and other healthcare professionals:

- the name of your bladder treatment drug.
- when you had your last treatment.

**Patient and family feedback is very important to us.**

**We would like to invite you to send any comments or suggestions on how to improve this booklet to [education.cancercare@nshealth.ca](mailto:education.cancercare@nshealth.ca) or feel free to call us at 1-866-599-2267.**

### **Looking for more health information?**

Find this brochure and all our patient resources here: <http://library.nshealth.ca/cancer>

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.

For more information, go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

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Please do not use perfumed products. Thank you!*

**Nova Scotia Health**

[www.nshealth.ca](http://www.nshealth.ca)

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The information in this brochure is for informational and educational purposes only.

The information is not intended to be and does not constitute health care or medical advice.

If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider. The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.