

Fever in a Cancer Patient: Solid Tumour, Hematology, Stem Cell Transplant

Instructions for Patients:

- This card is **ONLY** to be used when you have a fever.
- If your temperature is 38° C (100.4 F) or higher:
 - Do not take any medications to lower your fever, like acetaminophen or ibuprofen.
 - Go to your local Emergency Department right away and give this card to the Emergency staff.
 - ▷ This card alerts Emergency Department staff that you are a solid tumour, hematology or stem cell transplant patient with a fever, and needing treatment within 60 minutes.
 - ▷ Although your care is a priority, you may still have to wait while other patients, with more urgent concerns, are treated.
- During the next business day, call your cancer doctor/nurse and tell them you have been seen in the Emergency Department.

Instructions for Emergency Department Staff:

- This patient has cancer and is febrile. Febrile Neutropenia¹ is a medical emergency (CTAS Level II). Patient is to be assessed and receive their first dose of antibiotics within 60 minutes of presentation.
- The patient does not need to be isolated.
- At Triage: CBC (to be drawn within 10 minutes and sent as STAT).
- Blood Cultures: 2 sets (1 set = aerobic + anaerobic).
 - If the patient has a central line: 1 peripheral set and 1 central set.
 - If patient does not have a central line: 2 peripheral sets from different sites.
- Obtain electrolytes, BUN, Cr, urinalysis and urine C&S, chest x-ray.
- Other investigations as clinically indicated.

¹ Febrile Neutropenia is defined as a single oral temperature $\geq 38.3^{\circ}\text{C}$ (101F) or $>38^{\circ}\text{C}$ (100.4F) for more than 1 hour, and an absolute neutrophil count $<0.5 \times 10^9/\text{L}$ (500 cells/microlitre), or expected to fall below $0.5 \times 10^9/\text{L}$ (500 cells/microlitre).