

Why Am I Taking a Medication Used to Treat Cancer When I Have a Rheumatological Condition?

- Medications may sometimes be prescribed for different medical conditions as they have been found to be effective in those conditions.
- Depending on the medical condition, the dose and frequency given may differ.
- The medication you have been prescribed is also effective in the treatment of cancer, but the dose prescribed to you is tailored specifically to your condition to achieve the best efficacy while minimising the side effects that you may encounter.

Why Should Pregnant Ladies and Young Children Avoid Handling the Medication?

- As the medication is intended for you, this helps to reduce unnecessary exposure of the medication particles to others.
- Unnecessary exposure to medication particles may affect the growth of babies and young children, hence they should avoid handling the medication.

What Should I Do If I Vomit My Medication?

- Do not double dose or make up for the vomited dose. Continue to take as prescribed at the next dosing time.
- Clean the spillage area with soap and water to prevent unnecessary exposure of the medication particles to others.

If you have any problem with your treatment, please contact your doctor, pharmacist or nurse clinician.

Please keep all medications out of reach of children.

PHARMACY

Drug Information

Safe Handling of Oral Cytotoxics (Rheumatology, Allergy, Immunology)



How Should I Handle Oral Cytotoxics Safely?

	Recommended (DO)	Avoid (DO NOT)
When Handling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Try not to touch the tablet/ capsule with your bare hands. Use the cup provided to reduce direct contact with your medications. ✓ If you accidentally touch the tablet/ capsule with your bare hands, it is okay. Please wash hands with soap and water. ✓ Inform your physician/ pharmacist if you have difficulties swallowing them whole. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Open blister packs when there are signs of crushed tablets or leaking capsules. ✗ Break or crush tablets, or open up capsules. Inform your physician/ pharmacist if you have difficulties swallowing them whole.
Drop/ Spillage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ If surface is clean, pick up and consume the medication. It is good practice to clean the surface with soap and water to reduce unnecessary exposure of possible medication particles to others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Pick up and consume the medication if it dropped on dirty surfaces.
Storage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Store your medications in a cool and dry place, away from sunlight. ✓ Keep them in the original container/ zip-lock bag they came in, separated from other non-cytotoxic medications. ✓ Keep them in a place out of reach and sight of children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Store your medications in areas of high temperature and high humidity (e.g. near the kitchen stove). ✗ Store them in the car or in your pocket.

	Recommended (DO)	Avoid (DO NOT)
Disposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ If you have dropped your de-blistered medications, or have excess or expired medications for disposal, keep them in their intact blister packs and return them to Pharmacy in a sealed zip-lock bag on your next visit to the hospital. ✓ For more information on the disposal of cytotoxic medications, you may contact Outpatient Pharmacy at 6357 2040. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Throw excess or expired medications into general household or water waste.

Why Should I Avoid Touching the Medication With My Bare Hands?

- If you are handling your medication yourself, it is alright to touch it. However, please remember to wash your hands with soap and water after taking the medication.
- Washing your hands is a good handling practice and an extra precaution to minimise skin irritation and cross contamination.
 - For example, if a patient forgets to wash hands and touch common surfaces, it may lead to unnecessary exposure of the medication particles to others.

Will the Medication Affect the Good Cells in My Body?

- This medication may affect the good cells in your body but for the majority of patients, this is very minor and many patients may not experience any side effects at all.
- It is therefore important to follow up with your doctor regularly as he/she will monitor your condition (e.g. with blood tests) to determine if you are experiencing side effects from the medication.