

# Chemotherapy Spills at Home: What to do

Odette Cancer Centre: Chemotherapy Unit

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Chemotherapy spills and leaks are rare, but we want you to be prepared to manage the situation if it happens at home.

This guide will help you to recognize a spill or leak and manage it safely using the spill kit provided by the hospital.

If you experience a chemotherapy spill or leak, follow the steps in this guide.



*A Cancer Care Ontario Partner*

## How will I know if my chemotherapy has leaked or spilled?

1. The area around your catheter or PORT is wet.
2. Your clothes near the infusion pump are wet.
3. The chemotherapy pump or the pouch is wet.
4. The area around your catheter or PORT site has dry white powder on it.

## What is in my spill kit?

- 2 pairs of gloves
- 1 mask
- 2 absorbent blue pads
- 2 BIOHAZARD bags



## What else will I need?

- Paper towel
- Laundry detergent
- Strong tape (such as duct tape)
- 2 garbage bags or 2 plastic bags



## Step-by-Step Guide to Managing a Spill

1. Safely clear the area of other people and pets.
2. Wash your hands.  
Open chemotherapy spill kit.



3. Put on TWO pairs of gloves and the mask.



4. Close all intravenous (IV) clamps.



5. If you have an Ambulatory Infusion Pump, please follow the instructions by the nurse on how to stop the pump.

If you have an infusion bottle fold over and pinch the tubing below the connection site and above the bottle. Keep this fold in place with a strong tape such as duct tape.



6. Unscrew your catheter or PORT tubing from the tubing that is connected to the ambulatory infusion pump or the infusion bottle. Ensure the clear cap on the catheter tubing nearest your body stays attached.



7. Wrap the pump in ONE of the absorbent blue pads around the area that is leaking and tape. Place the pump or bottle in ONE of the BIOHAZARD bags. Seal the BIOHAZARD bag and place into a garbage or plastic bag and tie.



8. If the chemotherapy has spilled on the floor or counter, place the SECOND absorbent blue pad over the spill to absorb as much of the liquid as possible.



9. Place this pad into the SECOND BIOHAZARD bag.



10. Wash the area with warm soapy water and rinse with clear water 2 times. Put the dirty paper towel into the SECOND BIOHAZARD bag.



11. Remove your gloves and put them in the BIOHAZARD bag that contains the contaminated absorbent blue pad and paper towel. Seal the BIOHAZARD bag.



12. Place this used BIOHAZARD bag into a SECOND garbage bag or plastic bag and tie.



13. Wash your hands well with warm soapy water.



14. If the Chemotherapy has spilled on your clothes or bed sheets; remove all material (clothing, bed-sheets, towels) that has come into contact with the chemotherapy liquid. Place in washing machine. Wash with HOT water and laundry detergent.

15. CALL TO LET US KNOW OF THE SPILL

If you have home nursing services from the Local Health Integrated Network (LHIN) Home and Community Care (formally the CCAC), please call them directly.



If you do not have a home nursing service, please call the Odette Cancer Centre at 416.480.5000:

- Between the hours of 8:30am to 4:30pm, please call the Pump Registered Nurses at 416-480-6176
- After hours, weekends, and statutory holidays, please call after hours support 1.877.681.3057

16. You will need to bring the TWO garbage or plastic bags to Sunnybrook Hospital. We will tell you how and when to do this when you call to let us know of the spill.

17. If you have an ambulatory infusion pump, it is important you return it to Sunnybrook Hospital ONLY.

**WHO DO I CALL IF I HAVE QUESTIONS AFTER READING THIS BOOKLET?**

Monday through Friday 8:30 am - 4:30 pm

Chemotherapy Pump Nurse: 416-480-5000 ext. 6176

