

Outpatient Consolidation Chemotherapy: For patients with Acute Myeloid Leukemia

**For patients getting Daunorubicin and
Intermediate-High Dose Cytarabine**

In this booklet, you will learn:

- What is consolidation chemotherapy
- How to prepare for consolidation chemotherapy
- What to expect during the treatment phase
- What to expect during the recovery phase
- Where to get more information
- Who to contact

Adapted from the “Understand your outpatient consolidation chemotherapy: For patients with Acute Myeloid Leukemia” with permission from the University Health Network Patient and Family Education Program.

What is consolidation chemotherapy?

Consolidation chemotherapy is the second step in treating Acute Myeloid Leukemia (AML). Consolidation chemotherapy happens when we are unable to find signs of leukemia cells in your bone marrow (complete remission).

It is possible that leukemia cells are still present in your bone marrow. We may not be able to find these cells. You will get consolidation chemotherapy to kill any remaining leukemia cells and prevent the leukemia from coming back. With consolidation chemotherapy you will get the same or similar chemotherapy medicine that you got during induction therapy (the first part of your treatment).

You will get your consolidation chemotherapy as an outpatient. This means you will not have to stay at Sunnybrook Hospital overnight for your treatment. Your health care team (nurses, nurse practitioners, doctors, pharmacists, social workers) will work together to care for you when you come to Sunnybrook for your treatment.

Consolidation chemotherapy has two phases:

- Treatment phase
- Recovery phase

What is the treatment phase? (Days 1-5)

The treatment phase is when you get your chemotherapy medicine. Your treatment phase will last for 5 days in a row.

You will get two chemotherapy medicines called Daunorubicin and Cytarabine.

You will get these medicines through your central venous catheter. A nurse will ask you questions about how you are feeling and discuss any concerns you might have.

You will get help to manage any chemotherapy side-effects you have like:

- Nausea (feeling of having to throw-up)
- Mouth sores
- Constipation

A pharmacist will also meet with you to review your prescription medicine schedule. You will get blood tests done at least once during this week.

What is the recovery phase? (Days 6-28)

The recovery phase happens after you have finished getting your chemotherapy. Your recovery phase will last for 3-4 weeks. You will come to Sunnybrook Unit C606 during your recovery phase 2 times a week (for example every Tuesday and Friday) for 3-4 weeks.

You will get blood tests done at each appointment and will meet with a nurse to review the results. During the recovery phase, the level of blood cells (red and white blood cells and platelets) your complete blood count (CBC) will be low.

You may need many blood and platelet transfusions while your blood counts are low. You may also need help from your health care team to fight infections.

Outpatient Consolidation Chemotherapy

You will go to the Outpatient Complex Malignant Hematology (CMH) unit located on the 6th floor – C wing, room 06 (C606).

How to prepare for consolidation chemotherapy

Plan ahead:

- You must have someone living with you during treatment and after treatment is done until you feel better. This can be a family member, friend or a personal support worker.
- You must be able to get to Sunnybrook hospital every day during your treatment phase.
- You must be able to get to Sunnybrook Hospital 2 times a week during your recovery phase.
 - If you live in Barrie, Newmarket or the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) you may be able to have your recovery phase closer to your home. Ask a member of your health care team if this is an option for you.
 - If you cannot get to Sunnybrook on your own, Canadian Cancer Society has a program called Wheels of Hope that can help eligible patients and one family member or friend get to the hospital for their appointments. An annual fee is required. For more information and to register call 1-800-263-6750. You must request a ride a minimum of three business days prior to your appointment and can request rides one month in advance. Rides are not guaranteed and therefore you may need to make alternative arrangements.

- You must live 30 minutes or less away from a hospital emergency department.
- You must have a thermometer at home.
- You must get your prescriptions filled before you start your treatment.
 - To fill your prescriptions, visit the Sunnybrook Hospital Pharmacy located on M6 (M-wing, 6th floor) or at the Odette Cancer Centre Pharmacy located on T1 (T-wing, 1st floor). Bring your private insurance information if you have it.
 - You may also use a pharmacy near your home. If you plan on going to another pharmacy, give them your prescription as early as possible. They may not have cancer-related medicines in stock.

What to bring to your chemotherapy appointments

- **The medicines you are currently taking.** Bring a list of your medicines or bring your pills in their original labelled bottles.
- **All of the medicines that you have been told to take for your consolidation treatment.** A nurse or pharmacist will tell you when to take them.
- **Your OHIP card**
- **Your red Sunnybrook hospital card**
- **Meals and snacks for the day.** Bring foods with mild smells. Strong smells can sometimes make other patients feel sick. The clinic provides free juice and cookies.

- **Something to do.** Your appointments may be very long. You may want to bring a book or computer or tablet with headphones to keep you busy. There is free wireless internet available in the hospital.
- **One family member or friend for support/ company can sit with you in the treatment area.** If you have more than one person, they can wait in the waiting room.
- **Someone to drive you home.** It is not safe to drive after the appointment. Some medicines will make you feel sleepy.

What to expect during the treatment phase (Days 1-5)

Day 1

When you arrive for your appointment in the Outpatient Complex Malignant Hematology (CMH) unit located on the 6th floor – C wing, room 06 (C606), you will meet with a nurse to talk about your treatment and any concerns you have.

Be prepared to wait. Before your consolidation chemotherapy can safely begin, your health care team may have to wait for test results. Some of these tests may be blood tests, bone marrow biopsy or heart tests.

Your Day 1 appointment will last about 5-6 hours.

You will get all the treatments listed on page 7.

Intravenous (IV) fluids

Intravenous (IV) fluids will help to keep your body hydrated while you get chemotherapy. Hydrated means that your body has enough water and salt. You will get these by IV (directly into your blood) through your central venous catheter.

Daunorubicin Chemotherapy

Daunorubicin is given by IV through your central venous catheter. It takes 5-10 minutes to give.

Cytarabine Chemotherapy

Cytarabine is given by IV through an ambulatory infusion pump (AIP) in central venous catheter. The first dose takes 3 hours to give. Some of this dose will be given in clinic through your pump, and then you will get sent home for the rest of the dose through your pump.

You will get another dose of Cytarabine by IV through your central venous catheter at home.

The AIP will connect to your central venous catheter. You will take the AIP home with you overnight. The nurse will set a timer on the pump so you get your medicine at a specific time. You will get this dose about 12 hours after the start of Cytarabine.

You will get an AIP booklet explaining how to use the AIP at home.



Day 2

When you arrive for your appointment, you will meet with a nurse to talk about any side-effects you may have from the chemotherapy.

Your Day 2 appointment will last about 2-3 hours.

You will get all the treatments listed below.

Intravenous (IV) fluids

Intravenous (IV) fluids will help to keep your body hydrated while you get chemotherapy. You will get these by IV through your central venous catheter.

Daunorubicin Chemotherapy

Daunorubicin is given by IV through your central venous catheter. It takes 5-10 minutes to give.

Day 3

When you arrive for your appointment, you will meet with a nurse to talk about any side-effects you may have from the chemotherapy.

Your appointment will last about 4-5 hours.

You will get all the treatments listed below.

Intravenous (IV) fluids

Intravenous (IV) fluids will help to keep your body hydrated while you get chemotherapy. You will get these by IV through your central venous catheter.

Cytarabine Chemotherapy

Cytarabine is given by IV through an ambulatory infusion pump (AIP) in your central venous catheter. The first dose takes 3 hours to give. Some of this dose will be given in clinic through your pump, and then you will get sent home for the rest of the dose through your pump.

You will get another dose of Cytarabine by IV through your central venous catheter at home.

The AIP will connect to your central venous catheter. You will take the AIP home with you overnight. The nurse will set a timer on the pump so you get your medicine at a specific time. You will get this dose about 12 hours after the start of your first dose of Cytarabine.

Day 4

When you arrive for your appointment, you will meet with a nurse to talk about any side-effects you may have from the chemotherapy.

The nurse will take blood from your central venous catheter. This blood will be used to check your hemoglobin (red blood cells), platelets (blood clotting cells) and neutrophils (white blood cells that fight infections).

Your Day 4 appointment will last about 2-3 hours.

You will get all the treatments listed below.

Intravenous (IV) fluids

Intravenous (IV) fluids will help to keep your body hydrated while you get chemotherapy. You will get these by IV through your central venous catheter.

Transfusion

You may or may not need a transfusion today depending on the results of your bloodwork and how you are feeling. Your appointment may last longer than 2-3 hours if you need a transfusion.

Day 5

When you arrive for your appointment, you will meet with a nurse to talk about any side-effects you may have from the chemotherapy.

Your Day 5 appointment will last about 4-5 hours.

You will get all the treatments listed below.

Intravenous (IV) fluids

Intravenous (IV) fluids will help to keep your body hydrated while you get chemotherapy. You will get these by IV through your central venous catheter.

Cytarabine Chemotherapy

Cytarabine is given by IV through an ambulatory infusion pump (AIP) in your central venous catheter. The dose takes 3 hours to give. Some of this dose will be given in clinic through your pump, and then you will get sent home for the rest of the dose through your pump.

You will get another dose of Cytarabine by IV through your central venous catheter at home.

The AIP will connect to your central venous catheter. You will take the AIP home with you overnight. The nurse will set a timer on the pump so you get your medicine at a specific time. You will get this dose about 12 hours after the start of your first dose of Cytarabine.

Day 6

Your ambulatory infusion pump (AIP) will need to be disconnected from your central venous catheter. Also, your central venous catheter will need to be flushed after your chemotherapy is done. Your team in C606 will refer you to the Home and Community Care - LHIN (FORMERLY Community Care Access Centre - CCAC) and they will contact you at home. A nurse may come to your home **OR** you may be asked to attend a community clinic near your home to have your AIP disconnected and have your catheter cleaned.

What to do if you develop a fever during your **Treatment phase (Days 1-5) ONLY**

Please note: These instructions are only for the **Treatment phase (Day 1-5) ONLY**

If you develop a fever of 38.0°C (100.4°F) or higher, take 1000 milligrams (mg) of Acetaminophen (Tylenol®). You can only take Acetaminophen (Tylenol®) one time. A fever during the treatment phase can be a side effect from the Cytarabine Chemotherapy rather than an infection.

You must go to an Emergency Room right away if:

- Your temperature does not go down after taking Acetaminophen (Tylenol®) one time.
- If your fever comes back again after taking Acetaminophen (Tylenol®) one time.
- Your body starts to shake a lot.
- You become sleepy at a time when you should not be sleepy.
- You are confused in your thinking.



What to expect during the recovery phase (Days 6-28)

During your recovery phase, you will visit C606 two times a week (for example, every Tuesday and Friday).

When you arrive for your appointment, a nurse will ask you questions about your health and discuss any concerns you might have. This will help us understand what side-effects you may be having from your blood counts being low.

You will have blood taken through your central venous catheter. This blood will be used to check your hemoglobin (red blood cells), platelets (blood clotting cells) and neutrophils (white blood cells that fight infections).

You may need a blood transfusion if your blood counts are low and depending on how you feel. You may also need antibiotics to fight any infections you may get.

Your recovery phase appointments will last about 2-8 hours depending on your needs.



What to do if you develop a fever during your **Recovery phase (Days 6-28)**

Please note: These instructions are only for the **Recovery Phase (Days 6-28)**

If you develop a fever, you may have an infection. You must go to an emergency room right away if:

- A single oral temperature of $\geq 38.3^{\circ}\text{C}$ (101°F) OR a temperature $\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$ (100.4°F) which lasts more than 1h. Do not take Acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or Ibuprofen (Advil).
- Your body starts to shake a lot.
- You become sleepy at a time when you should not be sleepy.
- You are confused in your thinking.

Where to get more information?

Ask a member of your health care team for any of these pamphlets

- Leukemia Education Package and Your Care Needs During Treatment
- How to Manage Your Nausea and Vomiting (Cancer Care Ontario)
- How to Manage Your Fatigue (Cancer Care Ontario)
- How to Manage Your Mouth Problems (Cancer Care Ontario)

Who to call if you have questions?

If you have any questions about your care during your consolidation chemotherapy, please call:

Important Phone Numbers

Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre:
416-480-6100

Monday to Friday, 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM

- Please call the Complex Malignant Hematology Outpatient Unit (C606) phone number: 416-480-6100 ext. 4312



After hours weekdays 5:00 PM – 8:00 AM, weekends and statutory holidays

- Please call 416-480-4244 (locating) and ask to page the Leukemia Complex Malignant Hematology pager to speak to the Nurse Practitioner or Resident/Fellow On-call

Odette Cancer Centre
2075 Bayview Avenue
Toronto, Ontario M4N 3M5
sunnybrook.ca/programs/occ

