

# ***Patient Education***

***Hematopoietic Stem Cell Transplant/  
7-Northeast and 8-Northeast***

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## **Preparing for Your Cryopreserved Stem Cell Infusion**

**You are about to receive your stem cell transplant! This is an exciting time for you. This handout covers information about the stem cell infusion so you and your family are prepared. Please feel free to talk to your nurse and ask any questions you might have.**

### **Before Your Infusion**

You will receive fluids through your IV catheter before your infusion. Your cryopreserved (frozen) stem cells will be brought to your room and will be thawed at your bedside by a cellular therapy technician. Your nurse will also be in your room, giving you medicines so you do not react to the preservative in the stem cells. The nurse will also check your vital signs and make preparations to give you the stem cell infusion.

### **Side Effects**

When it is time for your infusion, your nurse will ask you to say something if you start to notice any side effects. Most of the side effects from the infusion come from the preservative, called dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO).

Some possible side effects during the infusion are:

- Tickle in the throat, which might lead to a cough or gagging.
- Funny taste in your mouth (some patients have said it tastes like garlic).
- Nausea (feeling sick to your stomach), which might lead to throwing up.
- Drop in your blood pressure, which might make you feel dizzy.
- Increase in your blood pressure.
- Stomach cramps and diarrhea.
- An allergic reaction (hives, itching, swelling or trouble breathing). This happens very rarely.

## Questions?

Call 206-598-8902

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns. UWMC clinic staff are also available to help at any time.

7-Northeast:  
206-598-7770

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Some patients have said that sucking on hard candy, or smelling or eating an orange can make the throat tickle and bad taste go away. Your nurse can give you anti-nausea medicine if you feel sick to your stomach.

### **During Your Infusion**

Your nurse will check your vital signs often and will stay with you during the infusion. How long the infusion takes varies based on how well you are feeling and how many bags of frozen stem cells are used. Each bag takes about 20 minutes.

### **After Your Infusion**

After the infusion is done, your nurse will continue to check your vital signs. Although you will not notice, your family and friends will notice that you will be giving off a funny smell from the DMSO. Some people have said it smells like garlic, oysters, or creamed corn. The smell should be gone after 48 hours.

It is possible to have a little bit of red color in your urine after the infusion. This red color is from broken-down red blood cells that were in the infusion with the stem cells.

Most people tolerate the infusion very well. Many say, "Was that it?" because it goes by so quickly. Receiving your stem cell infusion is an important step in your transplant process. It is a milestone worth celebrating!

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