

Your Stay on 4A Oncology

Welcome to the Oncology Unit at University of Washington Medical Center Northwest. We are happy to help support you through your admission on our unit. This handout will let you know what you can expect from our during your stay.

What to Expect During Your Stay

- **Calling for assistance:** Use your nurse call light or press the red nurse button on your bed to contact your nurse. In an emergency, pull your call light from the wall. Emergency cords are in the shower and by the toilet. We try our best to answer calls quickly, but sometimes there may be delays.
- **Visitors:** You are allowed visitors during the day and one person to stay overnight with you. All visitors must wear a mask while out on the unit. If you are on isolation precautions, your visitors must wear required personal protective equipment. Please notify your nurse if you would like a cot for your visitor to stay overnight and we will do our best to accommodate based on availability.
- **Preventing Falls:** Things such as changes in vitals, labs or certain medications may put you at risk for falls. We have *precautions* to help prevent falls. These precautions include using bed alarms, gait belts, non-slip socks or shoes, and having a staff member within arm's reach when you are out of bed (including in the bathroom).
- **Monitoring:** We will check your vital signs every 4 hours (during the day and night) if you are here for oncology care. Vital signs include body temperature, heart rate, breathing rate and blood pressure. Depending on your status, we may need to check more often.
- **Labs:** Labs are typically drawn in the morning with your early morning vital signs (if you have a central line). If you don't have a central line, a phlebotomist will take your labs. Depending on your lab work, you may need blood products or electrolyte replacements.
- **CHG and Mouth Care:** Patients with central lines and catheters need to bath daily with chlorhexidine (CHG) soap to help prevent infection. If you cannot shower, you can use CHG wipes. We have oral care kits for brushing your teeth.
- **Rounding:** You can expect to see your Providers once a shift. Your nurse and CNA will *round* (come to visit you) often and do safety checks.
- **Food:** You can bring food from home. If the food needs to be refrigerated or heated, it must be checked in at the front desk before it enters your room. Perishable foods can be stored for a maximum of 3 days. After that, they will be thrown away. Once food is brought into your room, it cannot be removed to be reheated or stored. This is to prevent foodborne infection. Please request door signage from your nurse if you would like your food to be reheated prior to entering your room.
- **Intake and Output (I/Os):** During your stay, we may need to record how much you eat/drink (*intake*) and urinate/have a bowel movement (*output*). Please notify your care team of any additional items you may bring from home to get an accurate intake.



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- **Activity:** If you are able, we encourage walking the halls and sitting up in your chair for meals. This will help keep up your strength. Please use non-skid socks (from the hospital) or personal non-skid shoes. For safety, please check with your care team before getting up or walking.
- **Medications:** Medications are tailored to your needs to help you succeed in your treatment. They can be given an hour before or after the due time. If you need the timing adjusted, please speak with your care team. We will provide all of your regular and as need medications. Please do not take any of your medications from home unless instructed by your care team.
- **Chemotherapy (If ordered):** Chemo does not start immediately when you arrive. For your safety, your Oncology provider, the pharmacy, and 2 nurses must review your chemo plan. The pharmacy will need at least 3 hours to prepare your chemo.
- **Live Plants/Animals:** For your safety we do not allow pets (unless you have a service animal) or live plants/flowers on the unit. This is to prevent infection.
- **Behavior:** We acknowledge that this is a stressful time, and being in the hospital can be challenging. We also expect that everyone treats each other with respect. We do not tolerate any inappropriate language and behavior.

Resources for Patients

- **Palliative Care:** Works with patients in a holistic way to help manage symptoms and set care goals. The palliative care team also ensures medical care and decision are in line with the patient's wishes and needs to maximize quality of life.
- **Spiritual Care Services:** Available as additional, culturally sensitive support regardless of faith or spiritual tradition. These resources help provide healing, comfort, and peace for patients and families facing losses, changes, or challenges.
- **Social Work and Care Coordination:** This team can help with advance directives, discharge plans, community services and care coordination