

Living With and Beyond Cancer Information Sheet

9. High temperature or fever

A high temperature or fever can be a symptom common in many cancer patients for a variety of reasons. Fever can be a consequence of the cancer, its treatment or a secondary reason such as an infection and must always be taken seriously. Feeling hot or feverish may also be related to a hormone imbalance in both males and females.

How can I manage my high temperature?

- A high temperature and fever is treatable once the cause is identified. However **it is essential that you inform the Acute Oncology Team as soon as you experience these symptoms.**

IMPORTANT—If you are on systemic anti-cancer treatment/chemotherapy you will be given a yellow card similar to the one below—please follow the instructions on the card as you may be neutropenic:

<p>Please check FBC U&E LACTATE CRP PERIPHERAL AND CENTRAL LINE BLOOD CULTURES FULL INFECTION SCREEN</p> <p>And inform the Acute Oncology Team of admission.</p> <p>ACUTE ONCOLOGY TEAM 01271 311579 OUT OF HOURS 01271 322577, BLP 500</p>	<p>Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust</p> <p>Systemic Anti-Cancer Treatment (SACT) Alert Card</p> <p>I am a patient receiving SACT and may be at risk of neutropenic sepsis. Neutropenic sepsis is a medical emergency.</p> <p>If you suddenly feel unwell and your temperature is above 37.5°C (99.5°F) or if you do not have a temperature but you are feeling very unwell you may have neutropenic sepsis and should seek emergency medical help.</p> <p>ACUTE ONCOLOGY TEAM 01271 311579 OUT OF HOURS 01271 322577, BLP 500</p>
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<p>Information for patients</p> <p>You should also contact us if you have</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> any bleeding or unusual bruising you are experiencing excessive sickness so that you can not keep drinks down you have severe constipation or diarrhoea you develop a skin rash (these problems are not usually related to neutropenic sepsis) <p>Please do not take aspirin or aspirin-like medicines (Brufen/Nurofen or similar drugs) without first checking with your hospital doctor. Please let us know if you wish to take any complementary medicines.</p>	<p>Information for hospital staff and GPs</p> <p>Consider the patient to have neutropenic sepsis if suspected:</p> <p>Blood neutrophil count of $\leq 1 \times 10^9/l$ And A temperature $>38^\circ\text{C}$ or $<35^\circ\text{C}$ Or Systemically unwell or a history of rigors</p> <p>DO NOT delay antibiotics they must be given within 60 minutes of presentation. DO NOT wait to confirm the neutrophil count before giving antibiotics.</p> <p>At particular risk are patients who have received SACT within the past 6 weeks. PLEASE CHECK NEUTROPENIC POLICY ON BOB</p> <p>DO NOT OFFER PARACETAMOL TO SUPPRESS TEMPERATURE</p>
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9. High temperature or fever - Resources/Information

Local Resources:

<p>Acute Oncology Service, Seamoor Unit NDDH 01271 311579 — Monday—Friday 08.00am—6:00pm Out of Hours, 01271 322577 ask for Bleep 500</p>	<p>Yellow Alert Card—Advice and information about high temperatures, please follow the instructions. Never feel that you are wasting the nurses time ALWAYS phone when you have a raised temperature.</p>
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National Resources:

<p>Cancer Research UK</p>	<p>http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/cancer-help/coping-with-cancer/coping-physically/fever</p>
<p>Macmillan Cancer Support Line www.macmillan.org.uk Call 0808 808 00 00 — 7 days a week 8am—8pm</p>	<p>Calls are free of charge from all consumer landlines and mobile phones plus all mobile networks. Please note that calls to this number are not free when made from outside the UK. If you are calling from outside of the UK call on +44 207 091 2230</p>
<p>Macmillan on-line Community</p>	<p>Online support— to share experiences or vent your emotions find others who understand—join today!</p>
<p>Marie Curie Support Line — Living with a terminal illness and looking for support www.mariecurie.org.uk/help/support/marie-curie-support</p>	<p>Calls are free of charge from all consumer landlines and mobile phones plus all mobile networks. The Support Line is open 8am – 6pm Monday to Friday and 11am – 5pm Saturday</p>

Other Resources :
