Cyclophosphamide Taken by Mouth

Patient Education Sheets
Understanding Your Cancer Treatment

Care Team Contact Information: _____

Pharmacy Contact Information: _____

Diagnosis: _____

- This treatment is used for many types of cancer.

Goal of Treatment: _____

- Treatment may continue for a certain time period, until it no longer works, or until side effects are no longer controlled.

Treatment Regimen

Treatment Name	How the Treatment Works	How the Treatment is Given
Cyclophosphamide (SY-kloh-FOS-fuh-mide): Cytoxan (sai-TAAK-sn)	Slows down or stops the growth of cancer cells by damaging the genetic material that cancer cells need to multiply. It can also be used to dull the immune response.	Capsule(s) or tablet(s) taken by mouth.

Treatment Administration and Schedule

- Cyclophosphamide is often given in combination with other treatments. Talk with your care team about your exact treatment and schedule.
- Cyclophosphamide is also available as an infusion into a vein (intravenous (IV) infusion).

Your cyclophosphamide dosing instructions:

_____

_____

_____

- Cyclophosphamide comes in 2 capsule and tablet strengths: 25 mg and 50 mg. Your care team will tell you which capsules or tablets to take.
- Your dose is based on many factors, including your height and weight, overall health, and diagnosis.
- Take cyclophosphamide by mouth 1 time each day, around the same time each day, preferably in the morning.
- Take cyclophosphamide with or without food.
- Swallow cyclophosphamide **capsules** and **tablets** whole. Do not chew, crush, or split cyclophosphamide **capsules**. Do not crush or chew cyclophosphamide **tablets**.
- Do not change your dose or stop taking cyclophosphamide unless your care team tells you to.
- Your care team may tell you to change your dose, temporarily stop, or completely stop taking cyclophosphamide if you develop certain side effects.
- If you miss or vomit a dose of cyclophosphamide, do not make up the dose. Take your next dose at your regular scheduled time.
- If you take too much cyclophosphamide, call your care team or go to the nearest hospital emergency room right away.

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Storage and Handling of Cyclophosphamide

- Store cyclophosphamide at room temperature between 68°F and 77°F (20°C and 25°C).
- If someone else is giving you your medication, they should wear gloves or pour the pills directly from the bottle into the cap, a small cup, or your hand without touching them. They should wash their hands before and after handling the pills.
- Keep cyclophosphamide and all medicines out of the reach of children and pets.
- Ask your care team how to safely throw away any unused cyclophosphamide.

Appointments

Appointments may include regular check-ups with your care team, lab visits, and imaging tests. It's important to keep your appointments whenever you can. If you miss an appointment, call your care team as soon as possible to reschedule it.

Supportive Care to Prevent and Treat Side Effects

Description	Supportive Care Taken at Home
To help prevent or treat nausea and vomiting	
To help protect your bladder	
Other	

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Common Side Effects

Side Effect	Important Information
Low White Blood Cell (WBC) Count (Neutropenia) and Increased Risk of Infection	Description: WBCs help protect your body from infections. A low WBC count increases your risk of infection. Recommendations: • Wash your hands often and bathe regularly. • Avoid crowded places and close contact with people who are sick. • Follow food safety and wound care advice from your care team. • Your care team may prescribe medicine to help your WBCs recover. Talk to your care team if you have: • Fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher • Chills • New or worsening cough or sore throat • Painful urination or signs of a urinary infection • Feeling much more tired than usual • Red, swollen, warm, or painful areas on the skin
Low Platelet Count (Thrombocytopenia)	Description: Platelets help your blood clot and wounds heal. A low platelet count increases your risk of bruising and bleeding. Recommendations: • Blow your nose gently and avoid picking it. • Brush your teeth gently with a soft toothbrush and keep good oral hygiene. • Use an electric razor for shaving and a nail file instead of nail clippers. • Avoid over-the-counter medicines that can increase bleeding risk (for example, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) like ibuprofen). • Talk with your care team or dentist before medical or dental procedures — you may need to pause treatment. Talk to your care team if you have: • A nosebleed lasting more than 5 minutes despite pressure • A cut that continues to bleed • Heavy gum bleeding when brushing or flossing • Sudden or severe headache • Blood in your urine or stool • Blood in your spit after coughing
Low Red Blood Cell (RBC) Count and Hemoglobin (Hgb) (Anemia)	Description: Red blood cells carry oxygen throughout your body. Low levels can make you feel tired, weak, dizzy, or short of breath. Recommendations: • Aim for 7 to 8 hours of sleep each night. • Do not drive, operate heavy machinery, or do other dangerous activities if you are very tired. • Balance activity and rest — stay as active as you can, but rest when needed. • Eat a balanced diet and follow any nutrition or supplement advice from your care team. Talk to your care team if you have: • Shortness of breath • Dizziness or fainting • Fast or irregular heartbeats • Sudden or severe headache

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<table>
<tr><td>Nausea and Vomiting</td><td>Description: Nausea is an uncomfortable feeling in your stomach or the need to throw up. You may or may not vomit.

Recommendations:
Eat smaller, more frequent meals.
Avoid fatty, fried, spicy, or highly sweet foods.
Eat bland foods at room temperature and drink clear liquids.
If you vomit, start with small sips of water, broth, or other clear liquids. If these stay down, try soft foods (such as gelatin, plain cornstarch pudding, yogurt, strained soup, or strained cooked cereal) and gradually return to solid foods.
Your care team may prescribe medicine for these symptoms.
Talk to your care team if you have:
Vomiting for more than 24 hours
Nonstop vomiting
Signs of dehydration (very thirsty, dry mouth, dizziness, or dark urine)
Blood in your vomit or vomit that looks like coffee grounds
Severe stomach pain that does not go away after vomiting</td></tr>
<tr><td>Low Appetite and Weight Loss</td><td>Description: Loss of appetite can lead to weight loss and low energy. Small changes in when and what you eat can help maintain strength and nutrition.

Recommendations:
Be as active as you can. Do light physical activity before a meal (check with your care team before starting an exercise program).
Note times of day when your appetite is best and eat your largest meal then.
Eat 5 or 6 small meals or snacks each day.
Choose high-protein foods (beans, chicken, fish, meat, yogurt, tofu, eggs). Eat protein first during meals.
Choose higher-calorie foods (avoid “low-fat”, “fat-free”, or “diet” options when trying to gain/maintain weight).
If you feel full quickly, avoid drinking 30 minutes before a meal and drink liquids between meals; choose calorie-containing drinks rather than diet drinks.
Have a bedtime snack that’s easy to digest (for example, peanut butter and crackers). If you have reflux, wait at least 1 hour before lying down.
Try nutritious beverages (high-protein shakes or smoothies) if solid food is unappealing.
Ask your care team about liquid nutrition supplements and ways to add protein or calories (protein powder, yogurt, ice cream).
Talk to your care team if you have:
Unintentional weight loss
Little or no appetite for several days
Excessive tiredness or low energy</td></tr>
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Hair Loss (Alopecia)	Description: Hair loss or thinning may begin days to weeks after treatment starts and usually grows back later. New growth can be a different color or texture and may not look the same as before. Recommendations: • Consider a short haircut before treatment and use scarves, hats, or wigs for comfort and confidence. • Keep your head covered outdoors to protect it from the sun and cold; apply sunscreen to your exposed scalp. • Use gentle haircare: mild shampoo, soft brush, and avoid heat styling and harsh treatments. • Ask your care team about wig prescriptions or resources for head coverings. Talk to your care team if you have: • No hair regrowth months after treatment ends • Concern about hair changes or need help finding a wig or support resources

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Select Rare Side Effects

Side Effect	Talk to Your Care Team if You Have Any of These Signs or Symptoms
Heart Problems	• Fast or irregular heartbeats • Swelling of your stomach area (abdomen), legs, hands, feet, or ankles • Shortness of breath • New or worsening chest discomfort, including pain or pressure • Nausea or vomiting • Weight gain • Pain or discomfort in your arms, back, neck, or jaw • Protruding neck veins • Breaking out in a cold sweat • Feeling lightheaded or dizzy
Serious Liver Problems	Treatment can cause a serious liver problem called veno-occlusive disease (VOD), also known as sinusoidal obstruction syndrome (SOS). This condition causes blockage of the small veins in the liver. Your care team may check your liver with blood tests before and during treatment. • Yellowing of your skin or the white part of your eyes (jaundice) • Severe nausea or vomiting • Pain on the right side of your stomach area (abdomen) • Rapid or unusual weight gain • Dark, tea-colored urine • Bleeding or bruising more easily than normal • Swollen or tight stomach area (abdomen)
Kidney Problems	• Decrease in your amount of urine • Blood in your urine • Swelling of your ankles • Loss of appetite
Bladder Irritation (Hemorrhagic Cystitis)	Cyclophosphamide can cause irritation and damage to your bladder. To reduce this risk, drink plenty of fluids and urinate frequently for a few days after each dose of cyclophosphamide. • Blood in the urine • Painful urination • Urinating more frequently • Stomach (abdominal) or pelvic pain • Fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher
Lung Problems	• Cough • Shortness of breath • Chest pain or tightness
Low Sodium Levels in Your Blood (Hyponatremia)	• Sudden weakness, unsteadiness, or trouble walking • Difficulty breathing • Seizures or fainting • Sudden weakness, unsteadiness, or trouble walking • Difficulty breathing
Risk of New Cancers	There is a risk of developing one or more new cancers during or after treatment. Talk with your care team about this risk, and ask about the signs and symptoms to watch for.

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Before starting treatment, ask your care team when to call 9-1-1 or seek emergency help.
If you experience any new, worsening, or uncontrolled side effects, contact your care team immediately.

Intimacy, Fertility, Pregnancy, and Breastfeeding

- Treatment may **change how you feel about intimacy and your body.** However, physical closeness—such as holding hands and hugging—remains safe. It is common to have questions about intimacy. If needed, talk to your care team for guidance.
- Treatment can affect your **ability to have children**. It may damage your reproductive organs or stop them from working. If you are worried about fertility, talk to your care team before starting treatment.
- Treatment may **harm an unborn baby**.
    - If you are able to become pregnant:
        - Your care team will verify your pregnancy status before treatment.
        - Use an effective method of birth control during treatment and for 1 year after your last dose of cyclophosphamide.
        - If you think you might be pregnant or if you become pregnant, tell your care team right away.
    - If your partner is able to become pregnant, use an effective method of birth control—such as condoms—during treatment and for 4 months after your last dose of cyclophosphamide.
- **Do not breastfeed** during treatment and for 1 week after your last dose of cyclophosphamide.

Handling Body Fluids and Waste

Some drugs you receive may stay in your urine, stool, sweat, or vomit for many days after treatment. Because many cancer drugs are toxic, your body waste may also be dangerous to touch. To help protect yourself, your loved ones, and the environment, **follow these instructions** for at least **48 hours** after each dose of **cyclophosphamide**:

- People who are pregnant should avoid touching anything that may be soiled with body fluids from the patient.
- You can use your usual toilet. Always close the lid and flush to discard all waste. If you have a low-flow toilet, flush twice.
- If the toilet or seat is soiled with urine, stool, or vomit, clean the surface after each use before others use it.
- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after using the toilet.
- If you need a bedpan, inform your caregiver so they can wear gloves and assist with cleanup. Wash the bedpan with soap and water daily.
- If you cannot control your bladder or bowels, use a disposable pad with a plastic back, a diaper, or a sheet to absorb waste.
- Wash any skin exposed to body waste with soap and water.
- Wash soiled linens or clothing separately from other laundry. If you don’t have a washer, place them in a plastic bag until they can be washed.
- Wash your hands with soap and water after touching soiled linens or clothing.

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Additional Information

- **Tell your care team about all the medicines you take**.
  This includes prescriptions, over-the-counter drugs, vitamins, and herbal products. Before starting any new medicine, supplement, or vaccine, ask your care team first.
- **Wound healing problems**. Wound healing problems have happened in some people who take cyclophosphamide. Tell your care team if you plan to have any surgery before or during treatment with cyclophosphamide.
  - Your care team should tell you when you may start taking cyclophosphamide again after surgery.
- **This Patient Education Sheet may not describe all possible side effects.**
  Call your care team for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

Notes

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