Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

How to Manage Bladder Irritation From Cyclophosphamide

This resource will help you manage bladder irritation while getting high-dose cyclophosphamide (SY-kloh-FOS-fuh-mide) treatment.

About bladder irritation from cyclophosphamide

Cyclophosphamide is a drug used to treat cancer. When your body breaks down cyclophosphamide, this can irritate your bladder. This usually goes away in 1 to 2 days. Symptoms can include:

- Feeling the urge to urinate (pee) often.
- Blood clots in your urine (pee) when you urinate.
- Urinating often in small amounts.
- Feeling like your bladder is not fully empty after you urinate.
- Having a painful burning feeling when you urinate.
- Having bladder spasms.

To protect your bladder, follow the instructions in this resource. If your doctor or nurse gave you different instructions, follow the instructions they gave you.

You can use the Daily Liquid Log at the end of this resource to keep track of your goals.

How to manage bladder irritation from cyclophosphamide

Stay hydrated by drinking enough liquids. This will help protect your bladder from irritation. Follow the instructions in this resource for how much of these liquids to drink and when to drink them.

How to stay hydrated

Drink at least 8 (8-ounce) servings (at least 2 liters) of liquids:

- The day before your treatment.
- The day of your treatment.
- Each day for 3 days after your treatment.

Drink non-caffeinated liquids (liquids without caffeine) each day to manage bladder irritation during your treatment. These include:

- Water
- Juice
- Soup
- Ice pops

Caffeinated liquids (liquids with caffeine) do not help to keep you hydrated. Do not drink more than 1 (8-ounce) serving of caffeinated liquids each day during treatment. This includes:

- Coffee
- Tea
- Soda

What to do during your treatment

You will have an intravenous (IV) line during your treatment. You will get fluids and medicine called mesna through your IV line. These will help protect your bladder during your treatment.

Try to urinate (pee) every 2 hours during your treatment.

What to do after your treatment

After your treatment, try to urinate every 3 to 4 hours while you're awake. Do this for 24 hours (1 day) after your treatment. Urinate before you go to bed, and during the night when you feel the need to. You do not need to wake yourself up every 3 to 4 hours to urinate.

Follow your healthcare provider's directions for antinausea medicine, if you take them. These help to prevent nausea (feeling like you're going to throw up) and vomiting (throwing up).

Ask your doctor before taking:

- Acetaminophen, such as Tylenol®.
- Aspirin.
- Other nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), such as Advil and ibuprofen.
- Vitamin E.

These medicines can cause bleeding and make it hard to tell if you have a fever. Read *How To Check if a Medicine or Supplement Has Aspirin, Other NSAIDs, Vitamin E, or Fish Oil* (www.mskcc.org/pe/check-med-supplement) to learn more.

When to call your healthcare provider

Call your healthcare provider if you:

- Cannot drink liquids the day after your treatment because you have nausea, vomiting, or both.
- Have vomiting that lasts more than 24 hours.
- Have pain while you urinate or blood in your urine.
- Have chills or a fever of 100.4 °F (38 °C) or higher.
- Have any problems you did not expect or cannot explain.
- Have any questions or concerns.

Read *Cyclophosphamide* (www.mskcc.org/cancer-care/patient-education/medications/adult/cyclophosphamide) to learn more.

Daily Liquid Log

Keep track of the liquids you drink to make sure you're meeting your goals. Make a checkmark for each cup of liquid that you drink. One cup is equal to 8 ounces.

Remember, your goal is to drink 8 to 10 (8-ounce) servings (about 2 liters) for each day listed below.

	8-Ounce Servings of Liquid									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Day before treatment										
Day of treatment										
Day 1 after treatment										
Day 2 after treatment										
Day 3 after treatment										

If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

How to Manage Bladder Irritation From Cyclophosphamide - Last updated on February 23, 2026
All rights owned and reserved by Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center