Chemotherapy drugs are chemicals used to destroy cancer cells. The chemotherapy drugs may also affect normal cells.

Biotherapy and targeted agents are a type of medication that boosts or restores the ability of the body's immune system to fight cancer, infection or other diseases. They may be given alone or with chemotherapy.

After chemotherapy or biotherapy has been given, a small amount of it may be present in stool, urine, blood, vomit and sputum. Small amounts are in semen and vaginal secretions. It is not known what effect contact with these drugs may have on people living with or caring for a person receiving chemotherapy and/or biotherapy.

Knowing how to safely handle contact with chemotherapy, biotherapy, body waste, laundry, trash, and spills is important. There are many ways to have contact accidentally:

- Spilled drugs or body waste touching your skin.
- Touching dirty linens, bedpans, or urinals that have body waste on them.
- Breathing in the drug if it has been splashed.

Follow these safety measures at home for **48 hours** after the completion of chemotherapy or biotherapy treatment.

**The 48-hour time period will end**

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**Wearing Gloves**

You will need to wear 2 pairs of latex gloves to prevent contact with the drugs and with body waste.

You can purchase disposable latex gloves at your local drugstore. If you have a latex allergy, ask for latex-free gloves.

- Throw the gloves away after using once.
- Wash your hands with soap and water.

**Body Waste**

Use these guidelines anytime you might touch actual body waste or items containing them. This includes toilets, commodes, bedpans, vomit pans, and urinals, as well as ostomy bags or other body waste containers.

- Always flush the toilet with the lid down.
- Flush the toilet twice after each use.
- Men should sit when urinating to avoid splashing urine.
- Use care not to splash when emptying containers into the toilet.
- Wear 2 pairs of latex gloves when cleaning toilets, emptying or cleaning body waste containers, or changing diapers.
- Clean the toilet bowl in the usual manner, but wear gloves. Clean up splashes with soap and water.
- Clean body waste containers after each use with soap and water. Rinse well. Ostomy bags should be emptied as needed; but they only need to be cleaned once a day.
Laundry
- Laundry may become soiled by chemotherapy or biotherapy drugs or body waste. Follow these guidelines to care for soiled laundry only.
- Wash soiled laundry right away. If this is not possible, put it in a plastic bag and wash it as soon as you can.
- Wear 2 pairs of latex gloves to handle and put soiled laundry in the washer.
- Wash soiled laundry 2 times without any other laundry. Use normal detergent and hot or warm water.

Trash
- Trash that has been soiled should be handled carefully. This includes trash that has been in contact with chemotherapy or biotherapy drugs or body waste.
- Wear 2 pairs of latex gloves to throw away soiled trash.
- Place soiled trash in leak-proof extra thick 2-ply garbage bags. Do not over-stuff the bags. Tie full bags closed. They can be disposed of with regular trash.

Chemotherapy and Biotherapy Equipment
- Equipment includes needles, syringes, IV bags, and IV tubing.
- Place needles and syringes in a puncture-proof container. This may be provided with your other equipment. You can use a coffee can or bleach bottle.
- Place IV bags and tubing in the container provided by your supply company.
- Check with your pharmacy or IV supplier about disposing of these containers.

Spills
If chemotherapy or biotherapy drugs or body waste are splashed or spilled, clean up the spill carefully using these guidelines:
- With 2 pairs of gloves on, soak up the spill with paper towels.
- Rinse area well.
- Dispose of paper towels using the guidelines for handling trash.

Skin and Eye Contact
Do not let chemotherapy or biotherapy drugs or body waste touch your skin or eyes. If this happens:
- Wash your skin with soap and water for 5 minutes. Call your doctor if the skin stays red for more than one hour or becomes irritated.
- Flush your eyes with water for 5 minutes. Call your doctor right away.

Sexual Intercourse
- If you are sexually active in the 48 hours after your cancer treatment, you need to use a condom. Small amounts of the drugs can be in semen and vaginal secretions, which could cause irritation to your partner.

Talk to your doctor or nurse if you have any questions or concerns about these safety measures.