

Apheresis Discharge Instructions

After T-cell collection (Leukapheresis/Apheresis) for CAR T cell therapy, it's important to follow specific home care instructions to ensure proper recovery and prevent complications. Below are general guidelines to help you care for yourself post-procedure.

Medications

Most medications can be resumed after apheresis unless otherwise directed by your healthcare team. It's crucial to inform your healthcare provider about all the medications you're taking, including over-the-counter drugs and supplements, to receive appropriate guidance.

Medications Affected by Apheresis

Some medications may be removed from your bloodstream during apheresis, potentially reducing their effectiveness. Your healthcare provider may need to adjust dosages or timing to ensure therapeutic efficacy.

Monitor for Symptoms

Be vigilant for any of the following symptoms and report them to your SCTCT care team:

- Fever: A temperature of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher.
- Feeling dizzy or light-headed
- Nausea
- Feeling cold
- Increase or decrease in blood pressure
- Abnormal heartbeat
- Infection at the needle insertion or catheter site
- Redness at the needle insertion or catheter site
- Tingling or numbness in the lips, fingers or toes
- Chills or shaking: May indicate infection.
- Shortness of breath: Could be a sign of complications.
- Bleeding or bruising: Especially at the catheter site.
- Pain or swelling: Particularly in the neck, chest, or arm on the side of the catheter.

Pain Management

- Mild discomfort: It's normal to experience some soreness at the removal site. Over-the-counter pain relievers like acetaminophen (Tylenol) can help alleviate discomfort.
- Persistent pain: If pain persists or worsens, contact your SCTCT care team.

Dressing and Site Care

- Keep the dressing in place: Leave the initial bandage on for at least 24 hours, or as directed by your apheresis care provider
- Maintain dryness: Keep the area clean, dry, and intact during this period.
- After 24 hours, it is safe to remove the bandage and gently wash the area with soap and water.
- Steri-Strips or surgical glue: If present, these will typically fall off on their own within 7 to 10 days.

Bathing and Showering

- Avoid submerging the site: Do not take baths, swim, or use hot tubs for at least 1 to 2 weeks, or as advised by your healthcare provider.
- Showering: After 24 hours, it is okay to take a shower. Gently wash the area with soap and water, rinse well, and pat dry with a clean towel.

Watching for a blood clot

A blood clot can block blood flow in the vein where the catheter was placed. Symptoms of a blood clot include pain or swelling in your neck, face, chest, or arm. If you have any of these, call your healthcare provider right away. You may need an ultrasound exam to rule out a blood clot.

Wash your hands

A catheter can let germs into your body. This can lead to a serious infection. To prevent this, make sure that you and your caregivers keep their hands clean. Never touch the catheter or dressing before you clean your hands. Wash your hands well with soap and water or clean them with alcohol-based hand gel.

Activity and Rest

- Rest: You may feel tired after the procedure. Allow yourself time to rest and recover.
- Avoid heavy lifting: Refrain from lifting heavy objects for at least 24 hours post-procedure.
- Resume normal activities gradually: Increase activity levels as tolerated.

Nutrition and Hydration

- Stay hydrated: Drink plenty of fluids to help flush out any residual anticoagulants used during the procedure.
- Eat balanced meals: Consume nutritious foods to support healing.

Follow-Up Appointments

- You will be scheduled for a follow up appointment the day following your apheresis procedure. Please be sure to attend this appointment in person. These are crucial for monitoring your recovery and preparing for the next steps in your CAR T-cell therapy.
- Communicate with your SCTCT care team and report any new or worsening symptoms promptly. You may call Baptist MD Anderson at 904-202-7300 option #3 or send a message via Baptist MyChart if available.

BMDA Reviewed 8/6/2025.