BCG TREATMENTS

What is BCG therapy, and why am I having BCG treatments?

Bacillus Calmette-Guerin (BCG) is the most effective intravesical immunotherapy for treating early-stage bladder cancer. BCG is a bacterium that is related to the germ that causes tuberculosis (TB), but it does not usually cause serious disease. BCG is instilled directly into the bladder through a catheter. The body's immune system cells are attracted to the bladder and activated by BCG, which in turn affects the bladder cancer cells. Treatment is usually started a few weeks after a transurethral resection of the tumor and is given once a week for six weeks. Often long-term maintenance BCG therapy is also given to reduce the recurrence of cancer.

What do I do before the treatment?

- If this is your first time receiving BCG therapy, you must have a chest x-ray before starting treatment.
- Try to restrict fluids before the treatment. You do not need to fast before the procedure.
- Please withhold taking any diuretics before the procedure unless medically necessary.
- Arrive at the office with some fluid in the bladder so that we can obtain a urine sample.
- No beverages with caffeine should be consumed 6 to 8 hours before the treatment.
- If you see blood in your urine or a urinary tract infection, please call our office as we may need to postpone the treatment.
- Disclose any medications, allergies, medical or surgical history to the provider.

What should I expect during the treatment?

The medical provider will go over what to expect before the BCG treatment is administered and ensure your consent.

- When you arrive at the office, you will be asked to provide a urine specimen to check for infection.
- A catheter is inserted.
- The BCG medication will be instilled into your bladder through the catheter.
- The catheter will be removed immediately after the medication has been instilled.
- An antibiotic and a medication to help with any bladder discomfort will be provided in the office. We ask you to take these medications before you leave the office.

What do I do after the treatment?

- Make sure you have a follow-up appointment scheduled.
- The BCG medication should be retained in your bladder for about 2 hours if possible. If you MUST urinate before 2 hours, the medicine will still be effective, but please attempt to wait at least 1 hour. Let us know at your next visit how long you were able to hold the BCG medication in your bladder. DO NOT try to hold the medication longer than 2 hours.
- Do not consume any beverages with caffeine up to 2 hours after the treatment.
- Consume a normal amount of liquids after the treatment.
- Remain active after the treatment to help move the medicine around the bladder. If you lie down, move from side to side and back to front every 15 minutes while the BCG medication is in your bladder.

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After waiting 2 hours to urinate, it is important to dispose of your urine using the below method:

- Sit down on the toilet and urinate fully to empty your bladder.
- After urinating, pour 2 cups of household bleach into the toilet.
- Let the urine and bleach mixture stay in the toilet for 15-20 minutes before flushing. Ensure you close the lid.
- Repeat the above process each time you urinate up to 6 hours after the treatment.

Your urine may be a blue-green color initially due to the medication given to you in the office to help with bladder discomfort. If you choose not to take the medication, your urine will be its normal color.

What are the normal expectations after the treatment?

- Irritative voiding symptoms which should resolve (burning with urination, pain)
- Blood in the urine, which should resolve with time
- Urinary urgency & frequency

What is the follow-up?

The provider will determine a follow-up plan based on each individual patient. Some follow-up visits may include a cystoscopy, repeat BCG treatments, or an office visit.

What are the risks?

There is potential for adverse reaction with any medication. If you experience any of the following, please call the office or go to the nearest hospital:

- Infection
- Irritative voiding symptoms that do not resolve within one week.
- Transient fever greater than 100.5
- Flu-like symptoms
- Abdominal lymph node swelling
- BCG infusion requiring treatment or hospital admission
- Allergic reaction including skin rashes, difficulty breathing, drop in blood pressure.
- Local infections
- BCG infection with fever, night sweats, cough and liver/lung involvement
- A possible positive PPD test

Important Contact Information

Midtown Urology

911 W. 38th Street, Suite 200

(512) 451-7935 phone

(512) 451-7965 fax

If you need to reach the doctor after hours for an urgent matter, please call our office at 512-451-7935 and follow the prompts to be connected with the on-call provider.

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You may also go to Seton Main Emergency Room on 38th and N. Lamar. Please only go to this hospital as our physicians have privileges there.

Hospital for Emergencies

Seton Main Medical Center

1201 W 38th St, Austin, TX 78705

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