

# What to Expect at Your First Treatment Visit



This booklet describes what to expect at your first treatment visit in infusion therapy. It includes answers to some of our most common questions. If you have questions after reading this, please speak with your doctor or nurse.

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# Getting ready for your first day of treatment

Complete the items on this checklist to help you get ready for your first day.

Watch our 30 minute online chemo class video on your computer, phone or tablet.

- Learn how chemo works, ways to manage common side effects and when you need to call your doctor.
- To access the video, visit **www.goemmi.com** and enter the code **uhchemo**
  - Enter your name and date of birth
  - Choose your doctor from the list
  - Choose if you are a patient or friend/family member
  - Click the green “view program” button
- If you want to attend an in-person chemo class, ask your nurse if this is an option or call the Cancer Information Service line at 216-844-5432.



Ask your doctor if you need to see a dentist **before** you start treatment.

Check with your doctor to find out what medicines you should or should not take before your treatment.

Write down your questions and talk to your doctor or nurse to get the answers.

Have your blood drawn at a lab, if your doctor orders it. Doing this a few days before your visit can save time on treatment days.



# Common questions and answers

## Where can I go for treatment?



Treatment is given by nurses in our infusion departments at many UH Seidman Cancer Center sites.

Talk with your doctor to find out what UH Seidman locations you can go to for treatment. It's best to talk to your doctor about this **before** starting treatment.

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## Will you contact my insurance before I start treatment?



Yes. Your cancer doctor's office will ask our pre-certification or "pre-cert" staff to contact your insurance. They will find out if you need prior authorization or pre-approval for your first treatment or anytime your treatment changes. If so, we will give your insurance the information they request. Often they ask for details about your diagnosis and treatment plan.

If your insurance does not pre-approve your treatment, we will let you know. We can refer you to a financial counselor who can discuss a plan with you. Talk to your nurse or doctor.

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## Can I drive to my treatment visit?

No. For your first treatment, you need a driver. This is for your safety. Your driver does not need to stay with you during your visit. Ask your treatment nurse if you can or cannot drive to future visits. This depends on your treatment plan.

Note: If you get treatment during a time when we are restricting visitors, your driver may not be allowed in the building. Please talk to our staff about our visitor guidelines.

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## Where can I park and what will it cost?



For treatment at **UH Seidman Cancer Center at UH Cleveland Medical Center**, parking is free for the first 2 hours. You may have to pay for parking on your first treatment day. At the first visit, we can give you a garage parking pass to use at future treatment visits. Please talk to your nurse. Valet parking is available at a cost.

For treatment at any community site, use their parking lot. You do not need a parking pass.

## Where is the treatment given?

Our treatment areas have chairs and a few beds. Some spaces are private, but most are fully or partly shared with other patients.

The staff assigns these areas based on what each patient needs and what space is open. If you have questions or concerns please talk with one of our staff when you arrive.

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## How long will I be there?



The time you are at the infusion center depends on your treatment plan. Infusions can vary in time from 2 to 8 hours. Check with your doctor or nurse about how long your visit will take. We suggest not making plans for the rest of the day in case your visit takes longer.

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## Should I take my routine medicine?



Your doctor may tell you not to take certain medicines the morning of your treatment or to take extra medicine before coming in.

Call your doctor's office if you are not sure about what medicines you need to take on your treatment day.

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## What should I bring?

A list of your current medicines. Include over-the-counter medicines, herbs, vitamins and supplements.

Driver's license or photo ID and insurance card. Provide an email address so you can register for our online personal health record.

A small cooler with any snacks, meals or drinks you would like to have while you are here.

Any medicines that you may need to take during your visit. Tell your treatment nurse **before** you take any medicines you have brought from home.

Items to help pass the time, such as books, word puzzles, music, phone or a computer. WiFi access is free.

## What should I wear?

Wear loose, comfortable clothing. Dress in layers or wear something that zips or buttons in the front. You may need to wear a mask during your treatment visit.

Bring a jacket, sweater or blanket because it can feel cold in the treatment area.

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## Whom can I bring with me?

While we support guests, there may be times when we restrict visitors for safety, such as during flu season or COVID-19 outbreaks. Please talk with our staff about our current visitor policy or go to our website at [uhhospitals.org](http://uhhospitals.org) for the latest visitor information.

For their safety, **children under the age of 18 years are not allowed** in the treatment area. Please talk to our staff with questions or concerns before your treatment day.

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## What can I eat when I am there?

You should eat before you come in for treatment. If you are at the treatment center during your meal times, you may want to bring a meal or snack with you. We have refrigerators and microwaves for your use. We also have snacks to offer like crackers and juice.

Note: You cannot leave the infusion center to get food from the cafeteria or restaurant during your treatment.

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## Where do I check in?



During certain times, you may be screened for viral symptoms and have your temperature checked before entering our UH buildings.

### **For treatment at UH Seidman Cancer Center at UH Cleveland Medical Center:**

If you are **seeing your doctor the same day**, check in at Desks A, B, or C on Floor 1 of the Seidman Cancer Center or go to the Breen Women's Health Pavilion on the lobby level.

After your doctor visit, check in at the Frankino-Dodero Family Infusion Therapy Suite located on the lobby level through the sliding glass doors.

**For treatment at a community site:** Check in at the cancer center's front desk for both doctor and infusion visits.

# Safety during your visit



**Masking:** During certain times, staff wear masks. You may also be asked to wear a mask. If visitors are allowed they also have to wear a mask. Please talk to our staff if you have questions.

**Cleaning:** All chairs and beds are cleaned and sanitized between each patient based on our hospital's guidelines.



**Hand washing:** All staff wash their hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer before and after caring for each patient. Please speak up if staff forgets and say "hands please." Their response should be "thank you" and then they should clean their hands.



During your treatment you can get up and move around. You are not allowed to leave the treatment area.

Bathrooms are close by. You may have to take your IV pole with you when using the bathroom. Our staff can help you. You have a call light for when you need to ask for help.

## Medicine safety

**It takes times to make and give you your medicines safely. Please be patient with us. During this process the staff:**

- asks you many times to state your name and date of birth.
- checks and double checks your medicines before they are given to make sure they are correct.
- wears masks and gloves – they may wear a gown and goggles when handling some medicines.



**We need you to speak up and ask questions.**

**Talk to your nurse if you have any questions or concerns during your treatment.**

# What happens at my first treatment visit?

This is a basic, step-by-step plan of what to expect at your first treatment visit.

Staff member	What will happen?
Front desk staff	<p>Checks you in and asks you to fill out any needed forms</p> <p>Asks for your email if you are not signed up for UHCare, the personal online health record.</p>
Medical assistant (also called an MA)	<p>Brings you back to a chair and takes your blood pressure, pulse, temperature and weight. Your weight is taken <b>with your shoes off at each visit</b> so that we can check that your medicine dose is correct.</p>
Your treatment nurse	<p>Meets with you, answers questions, and reviews your treatment plan.</p> <p>Starts an IV and draws blood if needed. It can take up to an hour for lab results to come back. It saves time if you have a blood draw a few days before your visit. Talk to your doctor and nurse about when and where to have your labs done.</p> <p>Reviews lab results and double checks your treatment orders as part of a safety check. If your blood work is okay, the nurse sends your treatment orders to the pharmacy.</p>
The pharmacist	<p>Double checks your orders for safety. Your treatment cannot be made ahead of time. This is because treatments are made for each patient and safety checks must be done. The pharmacy must wait for the orders from your nurse.</p> <p>Once the safety checks are done, the pharmacy starts to make your medicines. <b>This can take up to an hour.</b></p>
Your treatment nurse	<p>Picks up your medicines from the pharmacy. Performs a final double check of the medicines with another treatment nurse.</p> <p>Gives you your treatment. You may need to stay for a short amount of time after your treatment is done. Your nurse will tell you if this is needed.</p>

## To learn more

- Speak with your cancer doctor or nurse if you have any questions
- Call **216-286-INFO** to speak with the Health Librarian at the Puck Learning Resource Center
- Browse: [www.uhhospitals.org/seidmanresources](http://www.uhhospitals.org/seidmanresources)
- The Puck Learning Resource Center has info about:
  - Your type of cancer
  - Relaxation techniques
  - Local cancer support services
  - Clinical trials
  - Nutrition
  - Food Safety
  - Spiritual care
  - Caregiver support and resources
  - Sexuality
  - Talking with children about cancer
  - Quitting smoking
  - Other cancer learning needs you may have

- For info about **insurance and payment concerns**, please talk to one of our financial counselors:

For last names A–M, call **216-286-3814** For last names N–Z, call **216-286-3809**



To share feedback about this handout, please call the UH Seidman Cancer Center Office of Patient and Public Education at 216-844-5432.