



HEMATOLOGY ONCOLOGY PHYSICIAN EXPERTS

*Bringing hope to cancer patients*

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## Welcome to Our Office!

We are looking forward to your appointment. Please remember to bring your driver's license or other identification, your insurance card, and a complete list of your current medications and supplements.

Your referring physician may have already sent records and reports to our office. However, please verify with your physician that the records have been sent. If you are bringing records with you on the day of your, appointment, please make sure that the following documents are included:

- ❖ Pathology report
- ❖ Operative report
- ❖ Radiology reports (if you have had several tests include the most recent)
- ❖ Laboratory reports (the most recent or any that show abnormal results)

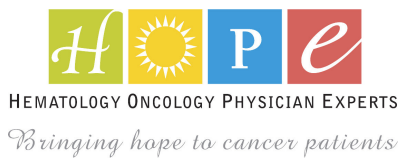
If you have had chemotherapy or radiation therapy, a summary of your treatment would be helpful.

You do not need to bring the actual films from any MRI, CT or PET scans that you have had. Again, if there are several, bring the most recent two or three.

Thank you for taking the time to make sure that we have this information. It will make it much easier to give you the time and attention you deserve.

Very truly yours,

HOPE Oncology staff



Realizing that good health is *your* top priority, we strive to make every patient's health care needs *our* priority. Our goal is to address your concerns in an efficient and courteous manner. We are partners in your healthcare, and we need your help.

We need accurate information about your past medical history, your family history, your medications and medication allergies, and the other physicians you see on a regular basis. We ask that you bring with you to your appointment a list of your medication or the actual prescription bottles so that we always have an updated record. We also need to know vitamins, herbal supplements, and any other non-food supplements that you take on a regular basis.

Prescriptions should always be refilled during the weekdays when our staff has access to your chart. We ask that you let us know if you change pharmacies so that we may call one convenient to you. You should also find out if there is a pharmacy near you for 24-hour availability, should the need arise.

Correct insurance information is important to you and to us. We need to know if you have recently changed insurance coverage. We also need to know if there are certain hospitals, radiology facilities, and laboratories that you have been told are preferred. If you have been told that a co-pay is necessary for your visits with us, this will be expected at the time we see you.

If you are a member of a managed care plan that requires a referral or pre-certification from your primary care physician, be aware that some offices require at least 5 working days to process a referral. If you are asked to bring your referral papers with you and you do not, this may result in a delay in your treatment.

## **Chemotherapy and other Cancer Treatment**

Chemotherapy drugs and other drugs used to treat cancer and blood disorders are very different from other prescription drugs. Often, chemotherapy drugs are only available in an intravenous form and are measured in very precise quantities for an individual patient. This requires that you wait for your dose to be prepared on the day that you are to receive it.

Although all chemotherapy drugs are different for different types of cancers, many chemotherapy drugs do require frequent laboratory tests. We make every effort to limit the number of laboratory visits you must make.

Some laboratory tests, particularly the complete blood count or CBC, may be very important in deciding how to dose your next chemotherapy treatment. If you have questions about your blood counts or other tests feel free to ask the physician or nurse to explain to you any abnormalities.

When you are receiving chemotherapy for cancer or another condition, it is important that you inform us of any serious medical problems that may develop. Some of these may be related to your chemotherapy but some are symptoms of other illness, which can be more serious in a patient taking chemotherapy. If you have any doubt about whether you should call about a particular complaint, *please do so*.

Serious conditions to call the nurse or doctor include:

- ❖ Temperature over 101 degrees or temperature over 100.5 that lasts for several hours
- ❖ Severe, shaking chills, whether or not fever is present
- ❖ Sudden shortness of breath or pain when taking a deep breath
- ❖ Swelling or pain in one or both legs that you have never had before
- ❖ A seizure which can be a disturbance of speech, shaking, or spasm that lasts for one minute or more
- ❖ Vomiting that prevents any eating or drinking for more than 24 hours
- ❖ Diarrhea or constipation that does not respond to over the counter medications
- ❖ Abnormal bleeding, particularly from the nose or gums
- ❖ Rash, hives or swelling of the lips or face.

*If you have any symptom that concerns you and you have been unable to reach our office, please go to an emergency room.*

### **What is Neuro-oncology?**

Neuro-oncology is the study of cancers and other tumors that affect the central nervous system, which includes the brain, spinal cord, and spinal fluid. Neuro-oncologists are physicians who treat these conditions with a variety of medications including chemotherapy and steroids, and also coordinate comprehensive treatment plans, including surgery and radiation oncology.

## **If you are a neuro-oncology patient**

You should be aware that there are many new treatments available within the last few years for patients with central nervous system diseases. There is information about your condition available from many sources, including the Internet and groups such as the American Brain Tumor Association (1-800-886-2282). The Dallas-FortWorth Metroplex also has a web site developed for brain tumor patients, [www.dfw-neuronetwork.com](http://www.dfw-neuronetwork.com).

Most patients have or will have MRI or CT scans to help in the diagnosis and treatment of their condition. It is very important that you bring any old scans with you to your appointment when you have a new scan done, particularly if you are changing radiology facilities. You should also ask to have a copy of any new scan so you can bring it with you to your appointment with us so that we can discuss the results.

Some patients will have anti-seizure medications prescribed by their neurologist, neurosurgeon, or other physician. Often these medications require blood tests to make sure the dose is not too high or too low. It is important that you let us know if another doctor orders your lab tests and refills so that we can keep our records up-to-date.

Often patients have interested friends or family members that want to understand more about your condition but cannot be present for appointments. It is our policy not to discuss any medical information to a non-spouse about your condition without your written approval.



## NOTICE

Any and all prescription refill requests need to be directed to your designated pharmacy/pharmacist. The pharmacy will in turn contact our office for refill authorization. Remember that some medications may require preauthorization or other verification by your insurance company before the pharmacy can fill it.

All refills will be processed within a 24/48 hour turnaround during *regular* business hours/days in our office.

Remember, if your insurance company requires any type of preauthorization and/or verification, they have their own processing time guidelines, which are usually 24-72 hours. Any questions or concerns regarding the processing times of the insurance company, should be directed to the insurance company as our staff has no control in that area.

Do not call after hours with prescription refill requests since all prescriptions must be recorded in your chart. If you require a new prescription after office hours, the doctor will call the pharmacy of your choice, but make sure you know the phone number and pharmacy hours *before* calling the doctor.

*Narcotics and other controlled substances will not be prescribed or refilled after regular office hours. You must be seen in our clinic or in an emergency room to obtain these prescriptions.*

A close watch on your medication will prevent you from depleting your prescription *before* a refill can be processed.

Note: *All prescription requests received on Fridays will be processed the following Monday.*