

Administering Subcutaneous Cytarabine at home

A guide for patients and carers

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Step by step guide for administration of subcutaneous cytarabine

Assemble equipment

Wash hands and assemble the following equipment provided on a clean surface:

- Gloves vinyl (if carer administering injection)
- Syringe containing chemotherapy
- Orange needle
- Small piece of cotton wool
- Cytotoxic bin
- Green apron
- Cytotoxic spillage kit

Preparation for injection

- Wash hands
- Put on gloves (if carer) and green apron
- Check the injection is in date and has correct name on it and that the solution in it is clear. Contact the hospital for advice if the label is incorrect or solution is not the colour of water and has any particles in it
- Unscrew the yellow 'bung' from the syringe containing cytarabine and place directly into the sharps bin
- Attach the needle with the plastic holder firmly onto the syringe and twist to 'lock' the needle firmly in place

Giving the injection

- Expose the area of the body to be injected. Upper outer arms, (thighs or abdomen can be used). Injection sites to be rotated or area to inject should be rotated each time
- Carefully remove the plastic cover from the needle
- Pinch the area to be injected between the thumb and forefinger, without squeezing too hard
- Insert the needle fully into the skin at an angle of 90 degrees whilst still pinching the skin
- Inject the liquid slowly and evenly, always keeping the skin pinched

- After injecting the solution, carefully withdraw the needle and release the skin
- If a small amount of drug leaks onto the skin this will not harm the skin. Wipe the drug off the skin with a small piece of cotton wool disposing of this directly in the sharps bin
- Put the syringe into the sharps bin. DO NOT PUT THE COVER BACK ON THE NEEDLE
- Remove gloves and apron and place both in the sharps bin
- Store the sharps bin in a safe place away from children and pets
- Once the sharps bin is finished with lock it as shown and return to the hospital (when you next attend an appointment with the haematology team)

In the unlikelyhood of spillage occurring please observe the following guidance

Spillage on the skin

Rinse the affected area promptly with cold water then wash gently with soap and water. Contact the hospital for advice

Spillage in the eye/s

Wash the eye/s using plenty of cold water. Contact the hospital for advice

Spillage onto clothing

Follow the step-by-step guidance on the Cytotoxic Spillage Kit. Change clothing and place soiled clothing on its own in the washing machine on a cold rinse then wash on normal cycle

Safe storage of injections

Please store the plastic container containing the injections as advised on the label as dependant on the preparation storage will be in the fridge or at room temperature.

Please store away from children

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