

**SANTA BARBARA HEMATOLOGY ONCOLOGY MEDICAL GROUP**  
**PATIENT TEACHING**

Please read the following information carefully and be sure to let us know if you have questions.

1. Your Health Care Team: Our practice is comprised of doctors, a physician assistant, nurses, medical assistants and administrative staff who are dedicated to delivering the highest quality healthcare to our patients. Oftentimes patients will see their doctor and the physician assistant on alternating visits. Our physician assistant works under the direction of our physicians and provides care that is complementary to the care provided by your doctor.
2. Checking in: Each time you visit please check in with our receptionists when you arrive for your appointment. If you're here to see the doctor or physician assistant, you'll be asked to complete a patient assessment sheet on each visit. We invite you to wait in the lobby until a medical assistant escorts you to an exam room. If you're here for chemotherapy and not seeing a provider, please wait in the lobby and a nurse will escort you to the chemotherapy suite. **If you have been kept waiting longer than 10 minutes beyond your scheduled appointment time for chemotherapy or a visit with a provider, please check in again at the front desk and one of our receptionists will assist you.**
3. Visitors: For the safety and comfort of our patients we ask that you limit the number of friends and/or family members who wish to accompany you during your chemotherapy appointments. It is important that you invite **no more than one visitor to be with you during your appointment. There is one exception to this policy; you are welcome to bring anyone you wish to your initial patient teaching appointment.**
4. Insurance information: Most insurance companies require that patients pay a co-payment at the time of the office visit. **Please be prepared to pay your co-payment each time you visit us as we cannot bill you for these charges.** Your co-pay applies to each visit in our office and will be collected at the front desk before you are seen. We accept cash, checks, MasterCard and/or Visa for your convenience.
5. Patient Financial Counseling: If your doctor determines that you'll be starting therapy, an appointment will be scheduled for you with our Patient Finance Coordinator. The Coordinator will review your insurance coverage with you and she will inform you of any charges for which you will be responsible. In many cases, if you have more than one insurance your out-of-pocket expense will be minimal (excluding any co-pays or co-insurance that your insurance policy requires). It is your responsibility to be familiar with your insurance policy. We bill most insurances as a courtesy to our patients but we do not know the details of your coverage. If your insurance requires that you obtain pre-authorization for any tests or procedures, please notify the Coordinator before these tests are scheduled. Otherwise, you may be held financially responsible for the costs of the tests. If your doctor changes your chemotherapy treatment, you will be advised by the Coordinator of any changes in your financial responsibility for the new regimen.
6. Billing: You can expect to receive statements from our office which show our fees, your insurance company's payments and your payments. We expect that you will pay your bills promptly and upon receipt. Should you have questions concerning your bill, please

contact our Billing Office at (805) 686-4654. Our staff is happy to answer any questions and help you in any way they can.

7. Chemotherapy suite: Our chemotherapy suite can oftentimes be extremely busy. Patient safety is our primary concern at all times. For this reason and for the comfort of our patients, **please remember to limit visitors to one person.** If additional friends or family members accompany you, they will be asked to remain in the lobby while you are in the treatment area. It is usually not a good idea to bring children with you and absolutely no one under the age of 16 can be allowed in the treatment area. Some chemotherapy treatments can take several hours. You're welcome to bring snacks and beverages with you. You'll want to wear comfortable clothing and please remember to bring your pain medication with you.
8. **Please do not wear perfume to your appointments in our office.** Many patients who are undergoing chemotherapy are especially sensitive to perfumes; the smell can be upsetting and nauseating to them. Please inform any visitor who accompanies you that if they are wearing perfume we will have to ask them to remain in the waiting area.
9. Cell phones: We request that you do not use cell phones while visiting our offices. If you must make a call, please step outside the building to do so. You are welcome to use the courtyard area or the garden area outside the chemotherapy suite. We appreciate your sharing this request with anyone who accompanies you on your visits.
10. Injection clinic: Your doctor may order injections to improve your red and/or white blood cell counts. These injections are given by appointment and each appointment takes only a few minutes. On weekends patients must be at the clinic at 8:00 a.m. unless otherwise directed. It will be necessary for you to obtain bloodwork prior to receiving some injections. You will be given specific instructions for any bloodwork that you need for various injections.
11. **Emergencies:** Our doctors are available or have another doctor covering our practice 24 hours/day. **If you have a true life-threatening medical emergency, please call 911.** If you need medical attention and it is not a life-threatening emergency, please call 563-5800 between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 7:30 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. on Fridays. Your call will be forwarded to our triage nurse, physician assistant or doctor. In some cases, we will need to call you back after we have had an opportunity to review your medical record. Your call will be promptly returned.  
  
After hours, on weekends and holidays, please call the Cottage Hospital operator at 682-7111 and a doctor will be contacted for you. For non-emergencies, please call during regular office hours.
12. Social Services: Our Patient Care Team is available to assist you with home care needs, transportation, financial assistance and counseling services. Please let us know if there is any way in which they can help you during the course of your treatment.
13. Patient Library: We are fortunate to have a Patient Library available as an educational resource. Patients, friends and family members are welcome to visit the Library to browse the many materials available, use the computers and talk with our Librarian.

14. Nutritionist: A nutritionist is available to meet with you to discuss any concerns you may have regarding diet, nutrition and related matters during your treatment. To schedule an appointment please contact the front office staff at 563-5800. There is no charge for this service.
15. Beauty Consultant: Beth Higgins is available by appointment on Mondays to assist our patients with wigs, headwear, make-up and breast prostheses. Beth can be reached by calling 1-888-848-7965. The Cancer Center of Santa Barbara provides wigs and headwear to our patients at no cost. The Social Services staff can give you additional information on this service.
16. Other Suggestions:
- If you are taking medication for pain please carry it with you at all times.
  - **Check your medications periodically and ask for refills during your visits to our office.** If you run out of medication at home and need a refill, please call your pharmacy even if the bottle says "no refills". Your pharmacist will call our office for authorization. **Please allow a minimum of 24 hours when requesting refills on your prescriptions. Some medications require pre-authorization from your insurance company and may take longer.**
  - We observe all legal holidays. Arrangements will be made for patients who attend the injection clinic.
  - We make every attempt to adhere to our schedule and see you on time for your appointments. Occasionally we have unforeseen challenges and we appreciate your understanding if you are kept waiting.
17. Your Providers are: Fred Kass, M.D., Tom Woliver, M.D., Donna Walker, M.D., Dan Greenwald, M.D., Cristine Fernandez, P.A.
18. Patient Finance Coordinator: Karla Hernandez
19. Administration: Lynn Humphrey, Practice Administrator  
Cami San Marco, Administrative Assistant
20. Social Services: Mary Solis, LCSW  
Rosario Campuzano, Administrative Asst.
21. Nutritionist: Sarah Schutzberger, R.D.

We hope this information is helpful. Please do not hesitate to let us know if there is anything that we can do to make your visits more comfortable.

Thank you,

The Staff at Santa Barbara Hematology Oncology Medical Group