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## Intravesical BCG Therapy

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*Pre-Treatment Instructions for Patients*

### ABOUT YOUR TREATMENT

BCG (Bacillus Calmette-Guérin) is a live weakened bacterium placed directly into the bladder through a catheter. It does not act as chemotherapy — it works by provoking your immune system to attack remaining bladder cancer cells. It is the most effective treatment available for reducing recurrence of non-muscle-invasive bladder cancer.

Treatment is usually given once a week for six weeks (the induction course), often followed by maintenance treatments over the following months or years. Each visit takes about 30 minutes plus the time you hold the medication.

### IMPORTANT — TELL US BEFORE TREATMENT IF

- You have a **fever, chills, or any active infection**
- You have **blood in your urine** or burning with urination
- You had a **catheter placed traumatically or a biopsy within the last 1-2 weeks**
- You take **immunosuppressant medication**, steroids, or have a condition that weakens your immune system
- You are receiving treatment for tuberculosis or have a history of TB

**BCG must not be given if there is active infection or recent bladder injury** — the bacteria can enter the bloodstream and cause serious illness.

### THE DAY OF YOUR TREATMENT

- **Do not drink fluids for about 4 hours before your appointment.** A less full bladder helps you hold the medication.
- Avoid caffeine and alcohol that morning — both are bladder irritants and make holding harder.
- Take your regular medications as usual unless told otherwise.
- Empty your bladder completely just before the treatment begins.
- Plan to stay nearby for about two hours while you hold the medication.

### WHAT TO EXPECT

A small catheter is placed into the bladder and the BCG solution is instilled, then the catheter is removed. You will be asked to **hold the medication in your bladder for about two hours**, changing position every 15 to 20 minutes if instructed so the solution reaches all surfaces. You then urinate, following the safety instructions you will be given.

### WHEN TO CALL THE OFFICE

Call 909.236.3333 before your appointment if you develop fever, chills, burning with urination, or blood in the urine. Your treatment will likely be postponed — this is for your safety and does not affect how well the treatment works.