

# ONCOLOGY PATIENT GUIDE



“Improving Community Health  
*Every Person. Every Time.*”

YOUR  
HEALTH  
IS OUR

*Priority*



Montgomery County Memorial  
Hospital + Clinics

Center for Oncology & Hematology



[www.mcmh.org](http://www.mcmh.org)



712.623.7226

2301 Eastern Ave. | PO Box 298 | Red Oak, IA 51566

Montgomery County Memorial Hospital + Clinics is an equal opportunity provider and employer

# Welcome

Montgomery County Memorial Hospital Center for Oncology Hematology offers up to date, comprehensive Cancer treatment and infusion services. Our goal is to provide patient centered care and navigation through your diagnosis and treatment journey. We are a proud member of The Association of Community Cancer Centers. Our Oncologist is board certified in medical oncology and hematology. Our nurse practitioner holds an Advance Oncology certification. Our nurses are chemotherapy certified with many years of experience between them.

We offer;

- ◆ Comprehensive up-to-date Medical Oncology and Hematology services
- ◆ Medical Oncologist and Nurse practitioner supervise patient care and treatments.
- ◆ Chemotherapy are delivered by certified, competent and compassionate Nurses
- ◆ Multi-disciplinary team approach for patient-centered-care , working with your primary care provider and specialists
- ◆ Provide Genetic testing to qualified individuals and initiate genetic counseling.
- ◆ On site, patient advocate provides support services, quality of life information and resources, assistance finding financial resources for living, co pays, and insurance.
- ◆ Our treatment room offers a comfortable environment, reclining chairs with massage and heat, TV's and bright environment overlooking our serenity garden.

We always encourage you to ask questions or voice concerns during anytime throughout your treatment.

Thank you!



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# MCMH Center for Oncology & Hematology Care

## Team

- Dr. Ronaldo Breier, MD Oncology & Hematology
- Colleen Ross, MSN, MHA, FNP-C, AOCNP
- Beth Zavala, RN
- Naomi Gettler, RN
- Robin Blazek, RN
- Valerie Ramsey, RN
- Hannah Thompson, RN
- Dana Gibbs, RN
- Faythe Goodman, CNA
- Sherstin Willyerd, Pharmacist
- Judi Erickson, Patient Advocate
- Katie Miller, Clinic Receptionist
- Melody Quinn, Phlebotomist
- Donna Paul, HIM



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**ROLANDO BREIER, MD**

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# Introduction to the Infusion Center

An Oncologist, Nurse Practitioner and Registered Nurses staff the infusion center. Our registered nurses specialize in oncology and chemotherapy administration. The nurses will be monitoring your treatments, be available to answer your questions, and make sure you have a return appointment scheduled.

The infusion center has recliner chairs equipped with massage and heat. Pillows and blankets are on hand for use. There are TVs, magazines, and Wi-Fi available for your enjoyment. You are also welcome to bring any reading materials, laptop/tablets, needlework, etc. with you.

You may use your Cellular phone in the infusion center. Please keep the use to necessary calls and keep the ring volume low.

On the day of your treatment, unless told not to, take your routine medications and eat as you normally would. Lunch will be provided if you are here over the lunch hour. Family members are welcome to use the cafeteria on the lower level. We have snacks and refreshments available upon request.

We ask you to bring any medications that you may need during the time you are here. These types of medications are not available in our center. All medication refill requests should go through your pharmacy.

If you are feeling ill, please call ahead and the nurse will advise you if should keep your appointment or if you need to reschedule.

If you need assistance from the car to the infusion suite, please let us know before your appointment.

We recognize that this time is stressful for you and your family. It is our hope we can provide the information and support you may need to help make your cancer journey easier.



# Communication

Office hours: Monday – Friday 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Phone: (712) 623-7226

Weekend on call nurse Saturday & Sunday 7:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Phone: (712) 370-0198

If you have questions after hours and they cannot wait until the next business day,

Call the ER number at (712) 623-7169

Any Emergency call 911

If you have started chemotherapy and experience any of the following problems contact the clinic immediately:

- ◆ Chills or fever greater than 100.4 degrees
- ◆ Cough or sore throat
- ◆ Painful urination
- ◆ Wounds that become painful, swollen, and/or red.
- ◆ Blood in your urine, stool, or vomit
- ◆ Severe headache, change in balance, visual disturbances, or stiff neck
- ◆ Shortness of breath
- ◆ Vomiting unresponsive to anti-nausea medications
- ◆ Diarrhea more than 5 times in 12 hours
- ◆ The other unusual physical symptoms that begin after chemotherapy
- ◆ For any visits to the emergency room



# Genetic Testing for Inherited Cancer

Genetic testing is a process that identifies specific changes (variants) in genes. Variants can affect the risk of developing diseases in different ways. Some variants can be harmful and increase the chance of getting cancer. Other variants can be beneficial, neutral, or have unknown significance. Genetic testing can also find out if family members who do not have cancer share the same variant as a relative who has a harmful cancer.

If you meet eligibility criteria, determined by a screening questionnaire and provider history, a sample of your blood or saliva is collected for analysis. Most private insurance and Medicare cover testing. Prior to testing, you will be notified of any co-pay and/or cost not covered.

Analysis of the sample will take a few weeks. Your provider receives the results and you are notified through your portal or via phone call. You will always receive a copy of the results. Results of your genetic testing are not released to other providers without your permission.

## Genetic Testing Results

If your test results detect a harmful variant, you will receive counseling regarding the meaning of the result and the cancer risk the cancer variant associated with. You will have the option to speak with a Genetic Counselor for genetic result review and an intensive family history analysis.

## Benefits of genetic testing

- ◆ Help you understand your cancer risk
- ◆ Help you and your family members understand their risk and if testing would benefit them
- ◆ If you already have a cancer diagnosis, testing will help your provider direct your treatment
- ◆ If you do not have a cancer diagnosis, and you have a positive result, testing can help guide you and your provider to create a plan for increasing surveillance and/or treatment

## Instructions for patients receiving chemotherapy

Patients receiving chemotherapy are susceptible to infections and breathing problems.

### Infections

- ◆ Avoid persons with cold or other infections
- ◆ Avoid large crowds, especially if you feel weak or have a cold, and talk to your support team if you attend
- ◆ Observe yourself daily for signs of infection, such as redness, swelling, pain or temperature
- ◆ Always have a thermometer on hand. Report any fever over 100.5 to your team. Be aware of the signs and symptoms of a fever including flushed face, fatigue, and/or chills
- ◆ Practice good personal hygiene. Wash your hands often, especially before eating and after using the bathroom. Hand washing is the #1 way to prevent infection
- ◆ Avoid working in the garden unless you are wearing protective gloves so you do not get cuts and scrapes

## Skin Care

### **Avoid cuts and scratches by protecting yourself**

- ◆ Cleanse cuts or scratches with soap and water, then apply an antiseptic ointment such as Neosporin. Report any signs/symptoms of infection (redness, swelling, warmth, or pain) to your nurse or practitioner.
- ◆ Avoid excessive exposure to sun and heat. Use sunscreen. Some medications makes you more susceptible to sunburns
- ◆ Do not tear or cut your nail cuticles. Keep your skin well hydrated.
- ◆ Use electric razors rather than blade type razors

## Mouth Care

- ◆ Brush your teeth gently with toothettes or a soft tooth brush 4 times a day (morning, after meals, and at bedtime)
- ◆ Examine your mouth daily. Notify your doctor if you experience white patches or soreness
- ◆ Use a alcohol free mouth wash
- ◆ Check with your doctor before having dental work done

## Rectal/Urinary Tract Care

- ◆ Avoid straining at stool to prevent bleeding or skin breaks
- ◆ If rectum is sore, tub baths with warm water or warm compresses to the rectum may give relief
- ◆ Talk to your doctor if you continue to have problems

## Patients Post Chemotherapy Waste Precautions

**Please follow these general guidelines during chemotherapy and 48 hours after treatment.**

### **Hygiene**

- ◆ Wash hands with soap and water after going to the bathroom.
- ◆ For 48 hours after chemotherapy, close toilet lid first and then flush toilet multiple times.
- ◆ Wash hands with soap and water after handling urine, vomit, stool or soiled linen or clothing.

### **Cleaning up Urine, Vomit or Stool**

- ◆ Family members should wear disposable gloves when handling soiled linen.
- ◆ When handling soiled linens, keep them away from the body.
- ◆ If soiled linens are not being washed immediately, put them in a plastic bag away from other linens.
- ◆ Wash soiled linens separate on hot water setting.
- ◆ Dispose of gloves in a plastic bag, secure tightly and throw out with home garbage.
- ◆ Wash hands with soap and water after removing gloves.

# Sex and Chemotherapy

Participating in sexual intercourse is generally okay while undergoing chemotherapy.

Cancer treatment causes a variety of sexual changes. Undergoing surgery, chemotherapy, hormone treatments or radiation can hinder desire and performance.

The most common reported sexual change for cancer patients is an overall loss of desire. Men undergoing treatment can experience inability to have an erection. For women vaginal dryness and pain with sexual activity can be frequent.

There are other ways to express affection, such as kissing, cuddling, or other shared activities. Men are encouraged to use condoms for protection from body fluids if you engage in intercourse 24 to 48 hours after receiving chemotherapy.

Pregnancy is discouraged during chemotherapy. Chemotherapy has the potential to harm the developing fetus. Men receiving chemotherapy and who have a partner of child bearing age should use a condom. Women of childbearing age should use a reliable method of birth control.

Some treatments may cause infertility. If of childbearing age and wish to conceive later, discuss this with your Doctor.

## Pain Management

Montgomery County Memorial Hospital is committed to ongoing pain management. You have a right to have an appropriate assessment and management of your pain. Our providers and nurses will work with you to manage your pain.

### **Pain management at home**

Here are some tips to remember to help manage pain:

- ◆ Before leaving make sure you know how to take your pain medication
- ◆ Let the nurse know if there are financial concerns with obtaining your pain medication
- ◆ If your pain medicine is not helping, call your provider
- ◆ Do not drive a vehicle while taking pain medication. Drowsiness is a common side effect; avoid activities that require you to be alert.
- ◆ Take frequent rest periods. Enlist family and friends to do tasks that may increase your pain.
- ◆ Gradually increase your physical activity. Getting back to normal activities will help healing and decrease pain.
- ◆ Nausea or upset stomach is a common side effect of starting pain medication. It usually resolves after 3 to 4 days. Changing pain medicine or adding a medicine to control nausea may be helpful. Take Pain medications with food
- ◆ Constipation is a common side effect of pain medications. Use stool softeners or laxatives as directed. Increase your intake of fruits, vegetables and fluids.

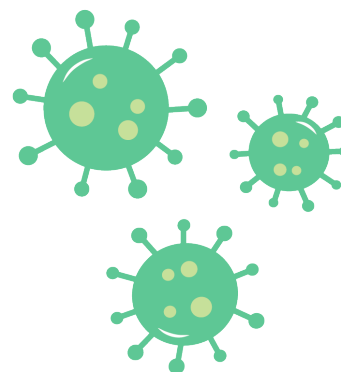
# Preventing the Spread of Infection

## Wash Away Germs with Clean Hands

Hand washing, or use of alcohol-based hand rubs, has been shown to reduce transmission of antimicrobial resistant organisms and reduce overall infection rates. The hospital has a staff policy regarding hand washing. It is okay to ask your caregiver if they have washed their hands before they care for you.

### How to perform hand hygiene with soap and water:

- ◆ Wet your hands with warm, running water.
- ◆ Apply soap.
- ◆ Scrub hands and wrists for at least 15-20 seconds.
- ◆ Rinse with warm running water.
- ◆ Dry your hands with a paper towel.
- ◆ Turn off the faucet with the paper towel. Discard the paper towel.



### How to perform hand hygiene with waterless hand gel or foam:

- ◆ Alcohol-based foam or gel is appropriate to use if your hands are not visibly soiled.
- ◆ Dispense a nickel-sized amount of foam or gel into your hand.
- ◆ Rub vigorously on all surfaces of your hands until dry.

## Cover Your Cough

Another important way to prevent the spread of germs and infection is to cover your cough. When you have to cough or sneeze, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue. Discard the tissue into wastebasket. Always clean your hands after using a tissue.

Masks, tissue, and hand hygiene stations are found near the main entrances and in our center.

## Oncology Nutrition Support

Our registered dietitians play a critical and indispensable role with our patient's care team. Proper nutrition is vital to maintain strength, manage treatment side effects, help to tolerate, and recover from cancer treatments. By providing guidance on healthy eating habits and recommending specific diets, this can help to optimize nutrition and overall wellbeing



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# Patient Advocate Services

Our patient advocate can assist you in a wide variety of areas listed below. Please contact Judi Erickson at (712) 623-7288

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Support Service</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Support groups</li><li>◆ General diagnosis and treatment information</li><li>◆ Relaxation techniques</li><li>◆ Appearance resources: wigs, head coverings, etc. Exercise and nutrition resources</li><li>◆ Caring cart items e.g. blankets, water bottles, lotions, etc.</li></ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Financial Information and Resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Assessment for grants and foundation funds</li><li>◆ Many pharmaceutical companies offer financial assistance for their medications</li><li>◆ Variety of foundations that offer assistance to pay medical expenses depending on diagnosis and treatment</li><li>◆ Social Security disability benefits</li><li>◆ Medicaid/Medicare information</li></ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Quality of Life Information and Resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Meals on Wheels</li><li>◆ Home Health Care</li><li>◆ Handicap permit</li><li>◆ Private caregivers</li><li>◆ Transportation</li><li>◆ Hospice services</li></ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Emotional Support for Patients and Loved Ones</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Someone to talk to and ask questions</li><li>◆ Counseling information</li><li>◆ Coping and communication resources</li><li>◆ Access to many resources in the MCMH Oncology &amp; Hematology Lending Library</li></ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Assistance with Legal Documents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Advance directives/Living wills</li><li>◆ Health Care Power of Attorney</li></ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>If you are:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Uninsured, underinsured, have Medicare and no supplement, entering into the Medicare system, Medicare/disability, have insurance through VA, have a high dollar deductible, COBRA recipient or have Medicaid with a spend-down, please contact the Patient Advocate for financial navigation assistance.</li></ul>

# MCMH Volunteer On-Call Chaplain and Spiritual Services

In partnership with the Montgomery County Ministerial Fellowship, Montgomery County Memorial Hospital has created an On-Call Chaplain program. This hospital is dedicated to providing the community with consistently high quality, holistic healthcare, including offering spiritual and emotional care to our patients, families, and our staff, regardless of their faith tradition, or no religious affiliation.

Caring for the whole person includes providing spiritual and emotional support during times of joy or suffering, calm or crisis, at the beginning of life or the end of life.

Volunteer Chaplain Associates have a weekly call rotation and are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This service is available to patients, family members and staff.

## Advanced Directives/Ethical Issues

An Advance Directive is “a written statement of a person’s wishes regarding medical treatment made to ensure those wishes are carried out should the person be unable to communicate them to a doctor”. A medical advance directive relates strictly to your health care and is not confused with a Last Will and Testament, which deals with your financial assets.

LIVING WILL is a document that states if your medical condition has no hope of recovery you do NOT want to have life sustaining measures.

HEALTHCARE POWER OF ATTORNEY (DPOA) is a person appointed by you who is permitted to make health care decisions on your behalf if you are unable to make or communicate your decision. As this person is your representative, it is important they are aware of your wishes and desires. This person must be someone you trust, who understands your values and beliefs, and who will be able to respect your wishes at a time of difficult medical decisions.

**These forms are available in our clinic for your review and can be completed and notarized at any time. Please ask if you would like more information.**

## Financial Assistance

At MCMH + Clinics we understand that medical expenses can be a burden. We are proud to offer financial assistance options to those in need. Our Federal Poverty Guidelines based program ensures that patients receive the support they need.

A patient who wishes to obtain Financial Assistance must complete a Financial Assistance Application and provide all necessary supporting documentation. The Financial Assistance Application is available for download at <https://www.mcmh.org/patients-visitors/billing/financial-assistance>.

We are here to help and support you. Please reach out to our Resource Counselor with any questions!



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**KIM SMELSER**  
Resource Counselor

# Patient Rights and Responsibilities

## Access to Care

Individuals shall be accorded impartial access to treatment or accommodations that are available or medically indicated, regardless of race, creed, gender, national origin, diagnosis, sexual preference or source of payment for care.

## Respect, Dignity, and Comfort

The patient has the right to considerate care with respect for their personal values, beliefs, and dignity. Pain management is a basic human right and each patient will receive the best level of pain control that can safely be provided.

## Privacy and Confidentiality

The patient has the right, within the law to personal and informational privacy, as manifested by the following rights:

- ◆ To have a family member, representative of choice, or practitioner notified of admission.
- ◆ To refuse to talk with or see anyone not officially connected with the hospital, including visitors, or persons officially connected with the hospital, but not directly involved in his/her care.
- ◆ To wear appropriate personal clothing and religious or other symbolic items, as long as they do not interfere with diagnostic procedures or treatment.
- ◆ To be interviewed and examined in surroundings designed to assure reasonable visual and auditory privacy. This includes the right to have a person of one's sex present during certain parts of a physical examination or procedure performed by a health professional of the opposite sex; and the right not to remain disrobed any longer than is required for accomplishing the medical purpose for which the patient was asked to disrobe. The patient's modesty, visibility and body temperature shall be protected.
- ◆ To expect that any discussion or consultation involving the medical case will be conducted discreetly and that individuals not directly involved in the care will not be present without permission.
- ◆ To expect clinical records to be kept confidential and to have access to a copy of those records within a reasonable time frame. The hospital must not frustrate legitimate efforts to obtain access to their own medical records and must actively seek to meet these
- ◆ requests as quickly as its record keeping system permits.
- ◆ To be placed in protective privacy when considered necessary for personal safety of the patient



# Patient Portal

## Access your electronic medical records online

Your provider will determine when it is safe for you to be discharged from Montgomery County Memorial Hospital. If you or your provider feels you need additional services after you leave, a discharge planner will visit you and help arrange for those services.

## Your Online Medical Records

Inside the patient portals, you may view, download, print, or export the following types of information

- ◆ Discharge summaries
- ◆ Immunizations
- ◆ Medications/allergies
- ◆ Personal information
- ◆ Lab test results
- ◆ X-ray and MRI reports
- ◆ Findings from other procedures



## How the Patient Portals Work

The patient portal is a secure connection that requires your login to access your records. If you share your login with others, they will be able to log in and view your personal online medical records. You may communicate with us by sending a message from the web portal. All email communication will be encrypted and comply with HIPAA privacy and security laws. You can retrieve or change a password anytime at the log in screen. You will periodically be prompted to change your personal password. You will need to notify us any time your email address changes. Do not send an email for emergency requests. If you have symptoms of an urgent nature, call a doctor or go to the nearest emergency room. Always logout of your session, especially from a shared computer.

## Accessing the Patient Portal

The easiest way to reach our patient portals is through the [www.mcmh.org](http://www.mcmh.org) website. On the home page, hover over “Patient and Visitors” and then choose “Patient Portal” from the drop down menu options.

MCMH launched a new medical records system in October 2020.

If you are looking for your medical records prior to October 12, 2020, please choose either “Hospital Portal - Records Prior to Oct. 12, 2020” or “Medical Clinics Portal - Records Prior to Oct. 12, 2020” depending on if you were seen in the hospital or in one of our clinics.