

BCG

Why do I need this done?

If your doctor has arranged for you to have this procedure, this brochure gives you the basic facts on what is going to happen to you and your body, in an easy to understand way. Intravesical immunotherapy or “**BCG**” is a procedure that occurs after surgery or biopsy for bladder cancer. It involves exposing the bladder lining to BCG (a live attenuated bacteria) which causes a reaction from your immune system against any remaining bladder cancer cells. This can reduce the risk of bladder cancer returning significantly.

What to expect before the procedure

BCG therapy is typically performed as an outpatient procedure and you will be awake. Prior to the procedure it is important you follow your surgeon/hospital's instructions which may include additional investigations, medication changes and/or a short course of antibiotics. You should contact your treating team if you have symptoms of urine infection prior to the procedure. To prevent dilution of the BCG preparation, you will usually be asked to limit your fluid consumption in the hours before your procedure.

What to expect during the procedure

After cleaning the genital area with antiseptic solution, numbing gel is applied to the natural water pipe (the urethra). A catheter is then inserted into the bladder to enable delivery of BCG preparation into the bladder. The catheter is then removed and you will be asked to try and not pass urine for the next two hours. Your hospital may allow you to leave after this and pass urine at home.

What to expect during the procedure

It is normal to experience the following side effects up to 3 days after your BCG therapy:

- Painful and/or frequent urination
- Small amount of blood in urine
- Flu-like symptoms
- Headache, low-grade fever, poor appetite, low energy, shivers



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You will be given specific safety instructions to follow for the next couple of days at home. It is advisable to avoid sexual intercourse for at least 24 hours after each treatment. BCG can make you feel tired and under the weather. Take it easy for a couple days, If you are experiencing painful urination, over the counter medication such as Ural can help drink plenty of water. It is normal for there to be a small amount of blood in your urine for 2-3 days after the procedure.

COMMON

Minor side effects
(as mentioned above)

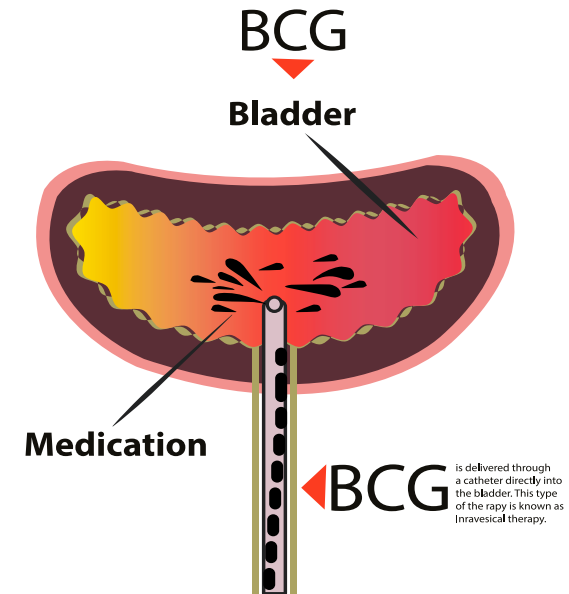
OCCASIONAL

Urine infection requiring antibiotics
Inflammation that can affect other
parts of the body (koints, liver, eyes)
Urethral scarring

RARE

Urine infection requiring antibiotics
Inflammation that can affect other
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Urethral scarring

Typically, you will receive BCG therapy once a week for 6 weeks, which is known as the ‘induction’ phase. After this time many people move on to a ‘maintenance’ phase where you receive further doses at a frequency that is right for you. Bladder cancer can recur during or after BCG treatment, so regular follow-up bladder examinations (cystoscopies) are an important part of your follow-up.



Disclaimer: The information in this publication is of a general, non-specific nature. It is not intended, and should not be used as a substitute for the advice of qualified medical professionals.



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