

## **MEDICATIONS AFTER TRANSPLANT SURGERY**

You will be required to take new medications after receiving your transplant to prevent “rejection” or failure of your new organ and to prevent infection and other post-transplant problems. Most of these are discussed below. **It is important to take your prescribed medication as ordered.** A medication card will be provided after transplant to help you track your medications. You should never change or skip a dose of your medication without consulting the doctor. During your recovery the nurse will teach you, and possibly your family members, critical information about these new medicines. **Please ask if you have any questions!**

### ***DO’ S AND DON’TS ABOUT YOUR MEDICATION***

- **Never skip or change your medication dose unless instructed by someone on the Transplantation Team.** If you miss a dose, or cannot take your medicines because of vomiting or other problems, please call your transplant team immediately. You will be given instructions on what to do with late doses.
- **Never stop taking any of your medications.** Your body will always need your immunosuppressive medications to prevent your body from “rejecting” your new organ. Even after years of taking these drugs, your body will reject the transplanted organ if drugs are discontinued.
- **Do not change the specific type of immunosuppressant medication without checking with your transplant team – they are not all the same!**
- **Some over-the-counter remedies are safe for your transplanted organ and some are not.** You will be provided a list of acceptable medications that can be used for problems such as common colds. If you have questions, please contact the transplant clinic.
- **Some drugs interact with transplant medications.** If a physician outside of transplant prescribes a new medication, the physician and your pharmacist should confirm that the new medication does not interact with any of your transplant medications. You will also be provided a list of commonly used medications that

interact with transplant medications so that you can be aware. If you have any questions about new medications, you can contact the transplant clinic.

- Avoid repeated use of pain medications unless you discuss it with the Transplant team
- Do not keep outdated medications. Check the expiration dates on your transplant medicines periodically.
- **Report any new symptoms, such as:**
  - ✓ Vomiting or diarrhea for more than two days or if you cannot eat or keep your medicines down.
  - ✓ Cough, shortness of breath, difficulty urinating, abdominal pain or headache, especially for more than three hours.
  - ✓ Skin rash especially if it is itchy or painful.
  - ✓ Painful swallowing or sores and patchy white areas in your mouth.
  - ✓ Fever over 100.5 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius) for more than 4 hours.
  - ✓ High blood pressure or high blood sugars
  - ✓ Blurred vision
- Learn the names of your drugs and know how much to take, when to take them, how to take them and important side effects. **Take your medications at approximately the same time every day.**
- Keep medications in a cool, dry place away from heat or light. Refrigerate only if the directions say to do so.
- **Keep all medications out of reach of children.**
- Always ask your pharmacist if the pills look different or are a different size or color from what you are used to taking.
- Make sure that you refill your medication prescriptions so that you never run out – plan ahead! It may take up to 2 days for some pharmacies to get your medications or to get the insurance approval.
- Remember to take your medications with you if you go on vacation or travel. Let us know when you travel outside the United States.
- Know the name of a nearby pharmacy or hospital if you plan to be away from home.
- When traveling, carry medications separately and do not check them with your luggage.