

Apheresis Procedure Instruction Sheet

Day of Your Apheresis Procedure:

- Eat a hearty meal, drinking plenty of non-caffeinated and non-alcoholic beverages.
- Drink a full 8-oz. glass of water or juice.
- Take the prescription medication you usually take, unless you were told otherwise. Verify with team if you should take certain blood pressure medication. Notify the team of all medication taken.
- Wear loose and comfortable clothing (i.e. button down/short sleeve shirts).
- Empty your bladder.
- Make a list of questions or concerns you may have to discuss with the apheresis doctor.

What to Expect Before the Procedure:

- The apheresis doctor and nurse will do a physical exam and explain the procedure, how the equipment works and possible complications.
- You are encouraged to bring someone with you for support, as a lot of medical information will be discussed.
- While you may have a visitor during the procedure, at certain times the nurse may ask the visitor to leave the room for a few minutes.
- You will be asked to sign consent forms before the start of your treatment.
- Your nurse will check your vital signs.

During the Procedure:

- Your nurse will be with you at all times, only leaving the room momentarily if necessary.
- You may feel some discomfort in the area where the vortex port, central line, or peripheral access was used for the procedure.
- You should not feel any pain or discomfort while receiving the apheresis treatment.
- You will be connected to an apheresis machine with transparent tubing
- You will be lying in a bed, and may bring your own blankets, pillows or books/electronics, if you prefer.
- You may eat, drink, read, sleep or watch TV during the procedure, but some of these activities will be difficult if needles are being used in one or both arms.
- If you have some complications like numbness or a tingling sensation, **tell your nurse immediately** and your nurse will make adjustments or administer medication to correct the symptoms. These sensations can be a reaction to the citrate (anticoagulant used to prevent your blood from clotting as it flows through the apheresis machine).
- If you have any unusual symptoms or discomfort, please **tell your nurse immediately**.
- The average time on the machine is between 1 and 4 hours.

After Your Procedure:

- Wait a minimum of 10 minutes in the bed after treatment completion to allow proper recovery and monitoring by staff. You will be given beverages to drink and snacks to eat to help you recover.
- After the procedure, catheter care will be done. Catheters, vortex ports, or peripheral access will be flushed with saline or heparin (or both) depending on specific line type and flushing guidelines. Sites will clot and pressure dressings will be applied.
- It is normal to have a small amount of blood on the dressing for a few hours, but if the dressing is soaked with blood and leaking, please apply pressure to the site and come back to our department (during normal business hours) or go to your local emergency room.
- You will be released from the unit in normal stable condition

Discharge Instructions:

- Eat hearty meals, drinking plenty of non-caffeinated and non-alcoholic beverages for the next 24 hours.
- Avoid heavy lifting (i.e. no items heavier than a gallon of milk) and strenuous exercise for the next 24 hours.
- Allow pressure dressings to remain for a minimum of 24-48 hours to ensure clot and/or scab forms.
- Wait 24-48 hours after your procedure to shower. Before you shower, you will need to cover the pressure dressing with plastic wrap first. Any food plastic wrap will work

The Apheresis Outpatient unit is only open Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

If you have any symptoms or concerns after leaving and the unit is closed, call the hospital operator at **703-776-4001** for the On-Call Apheresis Physician. The call center agent will contact the On-Call Apheresis Physician/Clinical Pathologist.