

Haematology and Bone Marrow Transplant Unit  
Cancer Care Services  
Level 5  
Joyce Tweddell Building  
Royal Brisbane & Women's Hospital  
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# Ward 5C Information Booklet

Haematology and  
Bone Marrow Transplant Unit  
Cancer Care Services  
Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital  
Metro North Hospital and Health Service

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## Welcome to Ward 5C

Ward 5C is part of the Division of Cancer Care Services at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital (RBWH). It is a Haematology and Bone Marrow Transplantation unit, and includes Radiation Specialty Suites. It is situated on Level 5 of the Joyce Tweddell Building. The staff of 5C primarily cares for people with haematological, or blood-related concerns, and those who are receiving bone marrow transplants. We also look after patients receiving specialised Radiation therapies. After consultation with patients and staff, this booklet has been written with the intention of making your stay with us as comfortable as possible by allowing you to have a source of easily accessible information about the guidelines and general functioning of our ward and hospital.

Please do not hesitate to ask questions at any time during your stay. The address for correspondence to this unit is:

Ward 5C  
Level 5  
Joyce Tweddell Building  
Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital  
Butterfield St  
Herston Qld 4029

# Rules of Ward 5C

Ward rules are in place on 5C, which apply to both patients and their visitors. These rules exist to protect you and all off the wards patients and to prevent any unnecessary complications with your treatments and well being during your stay. Please familiarize yourself with them, and ensure that your visitors are also aware of the rules and comply with them at all times.

## THESE RULES ARE:

EVERYONE must wash their hands before entering the ward and patient rooms

Only two (2) visitors are permitted at the bedside at one time

Sitting on a patient's bed is strictly not allowed

Visitors must not eat or drink in patients' rooms

Children visiting must be 8 years of age or older

People with colds, coughs or infections are not allowed on the ward

Mobile phones must be turned off

No flowers or live plants

Use of patient toilet facilities is prohibited

No smoking is allowed anywhere on the Royal Brisbane Hospital Campus

## Hand Washing

Research has demonstrated that the most harmful, infection-causing organisms are carried on peoples' hands. Therefore visitors must wash their hands upon entering the unit, and again before entering a patient's room. Hands should then also be washed upon leaving the ward.

## Maximum of Two (2) Visitors per Bedside

More than two visitors in attendance at any one time at a patient's bedside can provide a physical hindrance for nursing, medical and domestic staff to carry out their work. It also increases the risk of infection and raises the level of noise in the room, thus escalating the potential disturbance to other patients.

## No Sitting on Beds

Infection control guidelines advise against sitting on a patients' bed as viruses and other contagions may transfer from people's clothes on to the bed increasing the risk of infection.

## No Eating/Drinking in a Patient's Room

This increases the potential of air-borne contaminants being released into the enclosed space of a patient's room. Eating and drinking is permitted in the visitor's lounge and balcony/garden area only.

## Children

Children eight (8) years of age and over are welcome on Ward 5C, as long as they are supervised with strict hand washing techniques and appropriate behaviour while on the unit. Due to the increased risk of early childhood diseases and their potential to be passed on to the immuno-suppressed patients, children under 8 years are only permitted to visit patients in their rooms if prior approval is given by the Nurse Unit Manager. However, these younger children are permitted to visit with patients in the Visitors lounge at any time.

## Colds, Coughs and other Infections

The patients on 5C have extremely compromised immune systems due to their diseases and treatments, therefore they are vulnerable to even the most minor of bugs. Please do not visit the ward if you have ANY symptoms of infection.

## Mobile Phones must be turned off

These devices are not permitted within two (2) metres of any medical equipment, including IMED's, or IV infusion pumps.

## No Flowers or Plants

Live plants harbour organisms that may be harmful to patients on 5C. However, balloons are permitted.

## Visitor Toilet Facilities

For infection control reasons, visitors must use the toilet facilities provided in the tiled area just outside the ward, and not the patients' amenities.

## No Smoking

As of July 1, 2006, Queensland Health has implemented a No-Smoking Policy at all public health care facilities, except in a designated area. The RBWH has no such area provided. Therefore, it is a smoke-free campus. This applies to all staff, visitors and patients. Security staff will provide a warning for a first offence, but they then have the authority to fine any guilty party on the spot. Free NRT (nicotine replacement therapy) patches or gum will be offered where appropriate to all eligible nicotine dependent patients during their stay. Staff can also provide referrals to Quit line for more information and counselling on discharge.

## Medications

Please let Nursing Staff know if you have brought any prescription or non-prescription medications into hospital with you. For legal reasons, schedule 8 (S8) drugs (such as morphine-based pain killers) must be locked up in the ward's Controlled Drug cupboard.

Where possible, the RBWH will supply your medications during your stay on the unit. Your nurse will let you know which of your medications will not be required during your stay, and it is advised that you send them home with a family member. You must tell your nurse, or doctor, everything that you have been taking, including non-prescription and/ or herbal remedies, as these may have harmful interactions with the medications that you are prescribed during your stay.

There is space provided in the back of this booklet if you wish to write down your medications.

## Visiting Hours

Ward 5C has an "open" visiting hour's policy, although this is only within reason. For example, visitors may be asked to leave the bedside if a procedure is to take place, or if the level of noise is disturbing other patients in the vicinity. Relatives are requested not to sleep at the bedside, arrangements can be made for a close relative to stay overnight in the visitors lounge if extenuating circumstances arise with prior permission for the Nurse Unit Manager, or the nurse in charge if after business hours. All visitors MUST comply with the ward rules.

## Parking

The Metro Car Park in Butterfield St is the main parking area for the RBWH. Access is from 6am-12am. Fees apply.

Kings Car Park is on the corner of Herston Rd and Bowen Bridge Rd. Access is 24 hours. Fees apply.

The RNA Showground's located on Bowen Bridge Rd have some areas for parking for a nominal fee.

Access is not available during the Queensland Exhibition Show.

Limited street parking is available around the RBWH for a period of 2 hours maximum Mon-Fri, and all day Sat/Sun.

Outside Level 4 of the Joyce Tweddell Building are approximately 6 car parks, as well as a loading zone, for dropping off and/or picking up patients during office hours. After hours these time limits do not apply.

## After Hours Access to the Ward

The main access doors to Ward 5C, plus the Joyce Tweddell Building on level 4, as well as the main doors to the Ned Hanlon Building are all locked by Security between approximately 10pm and 6am.

To access the hospital, it is necessary to go through the Emergency department. Once at the entrance to 5C, there is a doorbell located on the right hand side of the main glass doors. Please notify Nursing staff if you anticipate being locked out of the ward or the Joyce Tweddell Building, or if you have any family members whom are expected after 10pm, or before 6am.

## Washing Facilities

Please be aware that there are no patient clothes washing facilities available on the ward. However, there is a dry-cleaning service available through the Nextra News agency located on level 1 of the Ned Hanlon Building.

You will need to advise your family member, or visitor, who will be collecting your dirty clothes for taking home to wash if you have soiled any of those articles with any bodily fluid or medication, especially if you have been receiving chemotherapy during your stay. These items will need to be only handled when wearing gloves, washed separately from other household washing and put through the wash cycle twice.

# Staff

## Nursing Staff

The nurse in charge of the ward is the Nurse Unit Manager (NUM). Each shift has a senior nurse called the SRN (Shift Resource Nurse) who is responsible for running the shift.

2 Registered Nurses will be assigned to your care for each shift, you may be also be nursed by agency or RBWH relief pool/casual nurses.

AIN's may assist with showers and personal cares when patients need assistance.

The RBWH is a teaching hospital, so supervised student nurses may also be involved with your care whilst you are an inpatient.

The CNC BMT/Ambulatory Haematology Care Coordinator may also visit in maintaining a link with you for all your treatment needs when you return as an out patient.

If you have any questions or comments do not hesitate to talk to a member of nursing staff about them.

## Medical Staff

You will have a team of medical doctors caring for you while you are an inpatient on 5C. This team will be made up of a consultant, a registrar and a resident. Even if you are out-ried to another ward, these medical officers will remain your treating team. The Haematology Consultant's work a monthly roster on the ward, so you may not be treated by your private Consultant whilst an inpatient, but they will still be involved with your care through unit meetings.

Ward Consultants will see you at least twice a week and as your condition dictates. Their registrar and resident will see you daily and keep them informed of your progress throughout your stay.

## Unit Staff

The Ward receptionists, who will endeavour to assist in any way they can. The nutrition support staff distributes and collects menus, as well as delivers your meals and snacks throughout the day.

Patient Support Officers will transport you throughout the hospital as required, eg for medical tests and x-rays. This also includes a team of housekeeping staff who are responsible for the daily cleaning of the ward.

## Allied Health Staff

### Physiotherapist

Physiotherapy services are provided to both inpatients and outpatients who have, or potentially have an underlying dysfunction resulting from disease, injury or life changes. Physiotherapy treatment is directed towards maintaining and restoring normal function, minimising dysfunction and preventing disability by providing non-pharmacological pain relief, enhancing movement patterns by restoring joint range and muscle function, maximising cardio respiratory function and achieving functional independence.

### Social Worker

Provide psychological assessment, advocacy and counselling to patients throughout their treatment journey and provide grief, loss and bereavement support for carers and families. There is also a Youth & Adolescent Social Worker for young patients.

### Welfare Worker

Provide support, practical assistance and information relating to travel and accommodation for patients, families and carers. They liaise with the Leukaemia Foundation and other appropriate agencies to ensure ongoing practical needs are met.

## **Occupational Therapist**

Occupational Therapy aims to help people participate in their everyday activities as safely and independently as possible, such as self care, domestic tasks and work or leisure pursuits. Cancer and its treatments often cause fatigue, weakness, pain, stress and/or other symptoms which can limit the ability to perform these everyday activities. The Occupational Therapist can provide strategies on how to manage these difficulties and improve your function in order to maintain a good quality of life.

## **Dietician**

The dietician may assess and monitor your nutritional status during your treatment. Side effects from your disease and/or treatment may impact upon your ability to maintain adequate dietary intake.

The dietician may implement strategies to help manage these side effects, to optimise your nutritional status. Education to maintain and improve your nutritional status at home can also be provided.

## **Other Support Staff**

### **Leukaemia Foundation**

Support workers attend the ward at least weekly and will introduce themselves to you, if you are a new patient in this hospital. The organization produces education booklets which are available outside the patient/visitor's lounge.

The Leukaemia Foundation can help with providing accommodation for patients and families who need to stay close to the hospital.

### **Queensland Cancer Fund**

Queensland Cancer Fund volunteers run regular "Look Good...Feel Better" workshops for women at the hospital. They also provide information/education booklets which are available outside the Visitors Lounge. Please see staff regarding bookings.

### **CanTeen**

Representatives from this group can meet young people (aged 12-24) whom are dealing with cancer, either as patients or as the offspring/siblings of patients.



# Daily Routine Cares

## Observations

Nursing staff will check your temperature, pulse rate and blood pressure regularly while you are being treated in ward 5C, including throughout the night. If you have a temperature, or become unwell, these observations will be done more often.

## Blood Tests

If you have a central venous access device (CVAD), such as a Hickman's catheter, PICC line, or Port-o- Cath, your blood will be collected daily at any time after 4 am every morning by Nursing Staff for tests ordered by your doctor. If you have no venous access, or simply an IV cannula, Queensland Health Pathology Services (QHPS) staff will visit the ward each day, or as requested by the medical officer, and collect your blood.

## Fluid Balance

If you receive chemotherapy during your stay on the unit, or intravenous fluids, your fluid intake and output will need to be monitored very closely by the nursing staff and recorded on a fluid balance chart. You will be asked to urinate into a urinal or pan, so that your urine output can be measured accurately. If you experience any diarrhoea, this must also be voided into pans as it will need to be measured. You will also be weighed at least once per day.

## Mouth care

Chemotherapy can kill fast-growing healthy cells, such as those that line your mouth. This can result in mouth ulcers, commonly referred to on this unit as "mucositis". Bacteria that live in your mouth can then contaminate these ulcers, leading to nasty infections. Good oral hygiene is extremely important. You will be given solutions with which to regularly clean your mouth in order to try and prevent these infections. These liquids are Normal Saline, Sodium Bicarbonate, and Chlorhexidine. Regular (up to 4 x day) mouth cares can decrease the severity of your mucositis. You may also still clean your teeth with a soft toothbrush, until your platelets are below 50.

## Footwear

Despite regular cleaning, floors get dirty very quickly. Therefore, it is recommended that you never walk around the ward/hospital in bare feet. Generally it is advisable to have a pair of rubber thongs to wear in the shower, and another clean pair of shoes or slippers to wear elsewhere.

## Showering

It is suggested that you shower and change into freshly laundered clothes daily. Nursing Staff will change your bed linen each day. The ward provides liquid antiseptic soap. You may supply your own hypo-allergenic, aluminium- and alcohol-free soaps, shampoos and deodorants.

## Hygiene

It is advised that all patients maintain good genital and peri-anal hygiene. These areas must be diligently cleaned after toileting, as well as being thoroughly washed daily in the shower to prevent skin conditions that can lead to serious infections.

## Shaving

Electric razors are advised as they are less likely to cause any injuries to patients whom have low platelets.

## Hair Loss

A common side-effect of a lot of chemotherapy drugs is hair loss, or alopecia. If your hair does start to fall out, you may wish the nursing staff to shave your head as the process of losing your hair can cause discomfort to your scalp.

## Finger/Toenails

As the majority of patients on 5C will at some point in their treatment have low platelets, it is suggested that finger and toenails be clipped carefully with nail clippers, rather than with scissors.

## Food and Drink

Menus are provided by the hospital for you to fill out for the following day's meals. Kitchen staff will come around to the bedside at every mealtime, as well as for morning and afternoon tea, and offer you a drink

or snack. The Visitors Lounge on the ward has a fully equipped kitchen, where you or your relatives/friends may prepare your food, if you prefer. You may store items in the refrigerator, labelling them clearly with your name. There are also snack and drink vending machine at the entrance to the ward.

\*It is recommended that patients with low platelets (clotting factors) do not use sharp kitchen utensils.

## Meal Times

Breakfast	7.00am
Morning Tea	10.00am
Lunch	12.00pm
Afternoon Tea	2.30pm
Dinner	4.30pm

## Accommodation

You will be admitted to a double room, a single room or a single HEPA filtered room. The double rooms have shared bathroom facilities between you and the person sharing the room. The single rooms have their own ensuite. There occasionally may be particular "rules and regulations" or special care guidelines that can apply to these rooms. These rules are designed to maximize your protection and well-being. It may be necessary for you to be cared for in one of these rooms during your stay. If this happens, you will be made aware of these rules.

## Ward 5C & RBWH facilities

The unit has a Visitors Lounge area, including a fully equipped kitchen, tables and chairs, a TV, couches and reading materials, as well as a balcony/garden area. RBWH facilities are located on the Ground Floor and Level 1 of the Ned Hanlon Building is a Post Office, newsagency/Convenience store, ATMs, plus a Pharmacy, Florist and a Food Court.

## Television

TV sets are installed above each bed. The cost for both free-to-air and Foxtel channels are as per the price list from the RBWH Foundation. Please ask the nursing staff or ward receptionist if you wish to have the television connected. Alternatively, you may ring RBWH Foundation yourself on ext 61391 and make arrangements. Please be aware that connection time is limited to 7.00am to 7.00pm daily, and television rental personnel will visit regularly to collect money.

## Telephones

Each bed has an individual telephone handset. To receive calls, please advise your family and friends to call the main RBWH switchboard on 07 3646 8111. The switchboard staff will then connect them to your bedside phone. Individual extension numbers are not disclosed due to privacy reasons, as well as the practicalities of patients needing to be moved to different beds or wards, depending on their health needs. To make calls from your bedside, you will need a Telstra Phone Away Card, which can be purchased from the automatic dispensers in the lobby of the Ned Hanlon Building or from newsagency.

## Other Electrical Equipment

Personal TV sets are not permitted in the hospital, but radios, CD/MP3 players, digital clocks. Please be aware that all personal items you bring onto the unit are AT YOUR OWN RISK. Queensland Health accepts NO liability if they are lost, stolen or damaged.

## Trust Office

If you have any valuables, or a large sum of money, that you are unable to send home with a family member, it is recommended that you notify Nursing Staff or the ward receptionist immediately, and these items will be placed with the RBWH Trust Office, which is located on the ground floor of the Ned Hanlon Building, next to the Admissions and Enquiries desk. Your items will be signed in and locked up securely. These belongings can then be collected back from the Trust Office in normal office hours.

## Safe Food Handling

When your white cell count is low, either from your condition or chemotherapy, we advise you to take the following steps to ensure that you protect yourself from food poisoning:

- Always wash hands with soap before preparing, handling or eating food.
- Defrost frozen food in the fridge or in the microwave.
- Use separate cutting boards for raw and cooked foods, and wash them well with hot soapy water after use.
- Avoid raw, meat and partially cooked fish, shellfish, meat, poultry and eggs.
- Wash fruit and vegetables well, and peel whenever possible.
- Where possible eat freshly cooked and freshly prepared foods.
- Do not purchase pre-made sandwiches or salads.
- Make sure when eating take-away, that the food is hot enough or cold enough, as appropriate, avoiding salad bars/buffets and places where food has been sitting in a "hot-box", or is not 'cooked to order' (eg: McDonalds).
- Avoid soft, ripened cheese (eg brie, blue vein).
- Avoid soft-service ice-cream, and those drinks made with soft-service ice-cream (thick shakes/milkshakes).

## Leaving the Ward

Please advise Nursing Staff if you are leaving the ward. There may be procedures or appointments that you are scheduled for, as well as tasks that your nurse may need to perform.

## Medications

Medications will be administered to you according to your doctor's directions by Nursing Staff. At no time should you self-administer any medication while you are an inpatient, without first discussing it with your Nurse or Medical Officer. Tablets are usually given out in the mornings (with breakfast), lunchtime and in the evenings (at dinnertime and before bed). However, there may be some variances, depending on the medication and your Doctor's specific directives.

## Spills

If you are receiving chemotherapy during your treatment on the unit, and you accidentally spill the drug or any other bodily fluid on the floor, please notify staff immediately. DO NOT attempt to clean it up yourself. It could be potentially hazardous and must be cleaned up appropriately.

## Discharge

Whenever possible, advance discharge notice is given. Community support services may be recommended by your doctor, nurse, physiotherapist or occupational therapist. If required, you may meet with our discharge facilitator, who can assist with making these arrangements. The unit receptionist will coordinate with the Outpatient clinics and the

Oncology Day Therapy Unit and provide you with notice of your follow-up appointments. Your doctor will send a prescription down to the pharmacy for your medications that he/she wishes you to take at home. Time permitting, they will be sent to the ward prior to discharge, or they may be picked up as you leave the hospital.

## Medication List

Sometimes it can be helpful to note down the medications that your doctor prescribes both during your stay in hospital and after discharge. You may find it beneficial to note what all of these drugs are taken for, or their indications, in order to assist in your understanding of your disease/condition.

Medication	Indication

# Chemotherapy Protocols

Chemotherapy protocols are groups of Cytotoxic medications that are prescribed to work together in order to treat various conditions/ diseases. If you are receiving chemotherapy for your condition, you may find it helpful to record here some details in order to keep track of your treatment:

Disease/Condition.....

Chemotherapy protocol.....

Names of Cytotoxic Medications in that Protocol: .....

.....

.....

Date 1st Cycle Commenced.....

Frequency of Cycles.....

Date Next Cycle Due.....

# Blood Cells

Blood consists of plasma (the transport medium), red blood cells, platelets and white blood cells. The bone marrow is the factory for these cells. If the bone marrow is unhealthy, there will not be enough of these cells to carry out their normal functions.

## Haemoglobin (Hb)

- Red blood cells contain Hb to transport oxygen from the lungs to the rest of the body. When Hb levels are low, your skin may appear paler than usual, and it can lead to feelings of tiredness, dizziness, shortness of breath and weakness. This is also known as Anaemia.
- Healthy Hb levels are measured as 115-180 g/L. If your Hb level falls to less than, or equal to 85-90 g/L, your doctor may prescribe a transfusion of packed red blood cells (PRBC).

## White Blood Cells (WCC)

- These fight infection by destroying disease-carrying microbes, as well as getting rid of your body's own defective cells.
- Well-functioning immune systems show a WCC (white cell count) of  $4.0-11.0 \times 10^9/L$ .

## Neutrophils (Neut)

- These refer to a type of white blood cell that kill bacteria, fight infection and remove damaged tissue.
- Beneficial Neutrophils counts are  $2.0-8.0 \times 10^9/L$ . If your Neutrophils 24 Ward 5C Information Booklet 2007 count is  $<0.5$ , you are referred to as 'neutropenic' and therefore have an increased risk of contracting significant or potentially life threatening infections.

## Platelets (Plt)

- Also manufactured in the bone marrow, platelets help blood to clot in order to prevent bleeding.
- Good platelet levels are  $140-400 \times 10^9/L$ . If your platelet count is too low, you have an increased risk of bleeding. If your level is  $<20 \times 10^9$ , your doctor may prescribe a platelet infusion.

Date	Hb 115-180	WCC 4.0-110.0	Neut 2.0-8.0	Plat 140-400



# Notes