

Low White Blood Cells During Chemotherapy

低白血球症

(Neutropenia)
(又名白血球減少症)

化學治療（化療）可使你的骨髓減少製造白血球，尤其在你接受化療 10 天到 14 天之後。這種現象稱為白血球減少症。

Chemotherapy can cause your bone marrow to make fewer white blood cells, especially 10 to 14 days after you have had therapy. This is called neutropenia.

白血球低的時候會有甚麼症狀？

白血球可以消滅細菌，使你身體健康。沒有被白血球消滅的細菌可引發感染，令你生病。

What can happen when white blood cells are low?

White blood cells destroy bacteria and keep you healthy. The bacteria that escape white blood cells can cause infections and make you sick.

如何才知道身體是否有感染？

- 發燒華氏 100.5 度或以上
- 發冷或出汗
- 喉嚨痛或口腔痛
- 咳嗽
- 小便困難或有赤痛感
- 陰道有分泌物或痕癢
- 全身疲倦無力或疼痛

How do you know if you have an infection?

- Fever 100.5 F or above
- Chills or sweating
- Sore throat, mouth sores or sores on the skin
- Cough
- Difficulty or burning sensation with urination
- Vaginal discharge or itch
- General tiredness or body aches

當白血球低的時候該如何做？

1. 保持個人衛生清潔，避免細菌感染：
洗手，洗手，洗手，洗手，是最佳的方法。
 - 保持皮膚，口腔和牙齒清潔，飯後漱口及刷牙。
 - 吃東西前或如廁後用溫水加肥皂洗手，或用免水手清潔劑。
 - 每天洗澡並抹乾皮膚。

What can you do when your white blood cells are low?

1. Keep yourself clean to avoid germs:
Handwashing, handwashing, handwashing, handwashing
 - Keep skin, mouth, and teeth clean, rinse your mouth often and brush your teeth after meals
 - Wash your hands before eating and after using the bathroom with warm water, soap, or waterless hand sanitizer
 - Take a shower each day and pat your skin dry

- 防止皮膚擦傷或割傷：
 - 不要赤腳走路
 - 用電動剃刀，不要用普通剃刀
 - 不要自己擠破暗瘡或刮破傷口
 - 洗碗或種花時帶上手套。清潔寵物時可能吸入細菌，所以最好請別人做。

2. 食物與飲食

- 食物要清潔及煮熟，包括配料，例如，將薑蔥等都要煮熟。
- 請家人為你將新鮮水果及蔬菜削皮，以消除細菌。你本人不要削水果及蔬菜皮。
- 飲食要均衡
- 飲水充足

3. 如廁習慣

- 避免便秘的發生
- 便後應揩抹乾淨，並應由前向後揩抹
- 便後洗手

4. 盡量避免的事情

- 遠離人群及避免與患傷風的人士接觸
- 遠離患有帶狀皰疹的成人或出水痘或麻疹的小孩。
- 在注射防疫針或牙齒護理的時候要徵求醫生的同意。
- 不要與最近打過防疫針的小孩接觸。

發燒

- 學會用體溫錶及準確地閱讀度數是很重要的，若有發燒，可以馬上通知醫生。

- Protect your skin from scrapes and cuts
 - Don't go barefoot
 - Use an electric shaver, not a razor
 - Don't pick pimples or scratch sores
 - Wear gloves to wash dishes or when gardening. You could inhale germs when cleaning up after pets, so ask others to do this for you.

2. Food and diet

- Clean and cook food well, including spices
- Ask family members to peel the skin off fresh fruits and vegetables to be sure that all germs are removed. You should not be peeling fruits and vegetables
- Eat a well balanced diet
- Drink plenty of fluids

3. Bathroom habits

- Avoid constipation
- Wipe yourself from front to back
- Wash your hands after using the bathroom

4. What to avoid

- Stay out of crowds and away from people who have colds
- Avoid adults who have shingles or children who have chicken pox or the measles
- Check your doctor before getting immunization shots or dental work
- Avoid children who have had recent immunizations

Fever

- It is important that you learn to read a thermometer correctly so you can report a fever.

- 白血球減少之期間，最好每天在同一時間測量體溫。
- 如體溫在華氏 100.5 度或以上，馬上打電話通知你的醫生或護士。
- 除非醫生吩咐，不要隨便服食退燒藥。
- 要知道甚麼是感染的徵兆及症狀。

得了感染會如何？

- 如果你認為自己有感染，切要馬上通知醫生。
- 如果你的白血球很低，你或許需要住醫院的私人房。而你的醫生，護士，家人及朋友可能需要帶口罩，並要洗乾淨雙手以保護你不受細菌感染。
- 感染有所好轉才能進行化療或電療。
- 你可能要服用消炎藥或其他藥物幫助你消滅細菌。
- 你也可能需接受白血球補助劑。

白血球補助劑

- 白血球補助劑可使你在癌症治療後，幫助你的骨髓製造更多白血球。
- 這種補助劑是用一種很細小的針用皮下注射到你的身體。很多病人學會自己注射。
- 在化療 24 小時之後便可以使用白血球補助劑。
- 注射白血球補助劑不但可減少受到感染，並可維持體內正常的白血球數量，這樣可使你按時接受化學治療，以及無需減低化療藥物的份量。

- Check your temperature at the same time each day if counts are low
- Call your doctor or nurse immediately if your temperature is 100.5F or above
- Don't take any medication for the fever unless it is ordered by your doctor
- Know the signs and symptoms of infection

What can happen to you if you have infection?

- Be sure to call your doctor right away if you think you have an infection.
- If your white blood cells are very low, you might be admitted to a hospital and stay in a private hospital room. Your family, friends, nurses, and doctors sometimes might wear a mask and will always wash their hands very well to protect you from germs.
- Your chemotherapy or radiation treatments will be delayed until you are better.
- You might receive antibiotics, medicines that help to kill germs.
- You may also receive white blood cell booster.

White Blood Cell Booster

- This is a medication to help your bone marrow make more white blood cells after your cancer treatment.
- It is given by injection with a tiny needle. Many patients learn to give themselves the shot.
- The medicine can be started 24 hours after your chemotherapy treatment.
- The injection can help prevent infections and also prevent delays in your chemotherapy schedule or lowering of your chemotherapy dose.

- 市面上有兩種不同的白血球補助劑，你的醫生會決定哪一種較適合你。

Neupogen (每天注射，療程 7-14 天)

Neulasta (每一療程注射一次)

- 如果你對大腸桿菌 (*E. coli*) 有過敏反應，你不可以注射任何以上一種藥物。
- 使用這些藥物後，有些人會感到骨痛。這是很常見的副作用，通常服用 Tylenol 可以止痛。

- There are two different boosters available, and your doctor will decide which one is more appropriate for you.

Neupogen (Given daily for 7-14 days)

Neulasta (Given once each cycle)

- You should not take either one of the medications if you are allergic to the bacteria *E.coli*
- It is common that some people experience bone pain when receiving these medications. Usually taking Tylenol relieves it.

參考資料：Neutrophil (癌症護理學會)，Neupogen (Amgen), Neulasta (Amgen)

References: Neutrophil, (Oncology Nursing Society), Neupogen (Amgen), Neulasta (Amgen)

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