When your loved one needs emergency care

At some point during cancer treatment, your loved one may need emergency care. Talk to members of the healthcare team in advance about what to do in emergency situations.

1. Signs and symptoms to watch for

Ask the healthcare team which of the following signs and symptoms require a trip to the emergency room (check them off below):

- Fever of 38°C or higher
- Change in mental status or confusion
- Difficulty breathing
- Trouble swallowing
- New or increased pain
- Uncontrollable nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea; these symptoms can lead to dangerous dehydration.
- Bleeding
- Rash or swelling in arms or legs

OTHER

2. Emergency contact on the healthcare team

NAME

PHONE NUMBERS

EMAIL

NOTES

3. After-hours contact

NAME

PHONE NUMBERS

EMAIL

NOTES
Where is the closest emergency room? The emergency room at your loved one’s treatment center may not be the one nearest to you. In an emergency situation, minutes can make a difference so it's important to know the location of the closest ER.

Upon arrival, let the ER staff know that your loved one is a cancer patient with compromised immunity. Ask for a face mask for him or her if one is not provided.

### Nearest emergency room (ER)

**HOSPITAL NAME**

**ADDRESS**

**DIRECTIONS**

**PHONE NUMBERS**

### Emergency bag checklist

- Copies of necessary medical records
- Copies of insurance ID cards
- List of all current medications, including drugs given as part of cancer treatment
- Phone charger
- Toothbrush
- Change of clothes
- Jacket or small blanket for cold hospital rooms
- Snacks, such as protein or granola bars
- Water bottles

Before going to the ER, don't forget to also include:

- Medications in prescription bottles, if possible
- Your own daily medications

### Childcare

If you or your loved one have children, have a plan in place for childcare. You may want to consider an immediate and a longer-term plan. For example, if you have to go to the emergency room, can your neighbor stay with your children until a family member arrives?

**NAME**

**PHONE NUMBERS**  **EMAIL**

**NOTES**
If you or your loved one have pets, you may want to consider asking a neighbor to check in on them during an emergency situation. Give a trusted neighbor a spare key, in advance, in case a trip to the ER lasts for more than a few hours.

Pick a family member or friend to act as a point person who will take messages and provide updates during an emergency situation. You will likely be focused on getting your loved one needed care, so instead of fielding calls from concerned family and friends, designate someone else to be your point person, so you only have to update one person.