

Preparing your **child** for the hospital stay

Your child may ask a lot of questions about the hospital stay. Below are some common questions and some suggested answers for helping children understand their stay at the hospital.

HOW LONG WILL I BE IN THE HOSPITAL?

There is no set time that you'll be in the hospital. The transplant itself only takes a few hours. However, getting your body ready for the transplant and healing afterwards can take a long time. You will have to be in the hospital for one or more months.

Before your transplant, your medical team will help get your body ready for the transplant. It takes about a week of chemotherapy and radiation to get rid of the sick cells. After your transplant, the doctors will want you to stay in the hospital until your bone marrow starts making new blood cells. Before you leave the hospital, they need to know that your body is strong enough to fight off infections. This can take a month or more. When your team thinks you're ready, you'll get to go home, but you'll need to come back often so they can make sure everything is going well.

WILL I GET POKED WITH A LOT OF NEEDLES?

No, not if the doctor gives you a central line. Remember seeing it in the DVD? Getting the central line put in might hurt a little bit. But it will help your team give you medicines and take blood without using needles.

CAN I SEE MY FAMILY AT THE HOSPITAL?

Parents and family can visit. However, once your treatment starts, you'll be in a germ-free room. Your doctors don't want you to catch a cold or any other illness while your body is too weak to fight off infections. Even a cold could make you very sick. You might not be able to have a lot of visitors, but you will not be alone at the hospital.

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