

CYTOTOXIC DRUGS

INSTRUCTIONS

Read the background out loud and use the guiding questions to facilitate a discussion about cytotoxic drugs.

AFTER THIS HUDDLE

Staff should be able to:

- Identify what a cytotoxic drug is.
- Reduce their risk of exposure to cytotoxic drugs.

NOTES TO THE HUDDLE LEADER

- Review the policies in place around cytotoxic drugs; including what training is required, who has the training, and what should be done in the event of exposure.

BACKGROUND

Cytotoxic drugs are intended for the treatment of cancer, as well as rheumatoid arthritis, multiple sclerosis and auto-immune disorders. A designated care area with all appropriate administrating and personal protective equipment, as well as spill clean-up supplies should be set up for cytotoxic drug treatment. These drugs are highly toxic and must only be administrated by trained and authorized staff. Exposure to cytotoxic waste can occur through handling items such as bedpans, catheter bags, vomitus bowls, bed linen or clothing soiled with patient waste, or cleaning spills. Training for special handling procedures to avoid skin contact, spill clean-up, and disposal must be in place to prevent exposure to staff.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What training is required to handle cytotoxic drugs?
- What policies do we have in place for handling and disposing of cytotoxic drugs?
- How would you know if a person in care is receiving cytotoxic drugs?
- What should you do if you are exposed to cytotoxic drugs?