



Oncology Updates

for the Children's Cancer and Blood Disorders Center



Clinic News



The Children's Cancer and Blood Disorders Center would like to wish you and your family a happy Thanksgiving!

The clinic will be closed on Thanksgiving Day, November 22, 2018.

B.E.A.C.H Buddy Program

The B.E.A.C.H (Be a Cancer and Hematology) Buddy Program allows students from EVMS to come by the clinic and spend time with kids who are receiving treatment. Just like our hospital volunteers, the students can interact with the kids by playing video games, board games, doing arts and crafts, or just simply talking. If you have any questions regarding the B.E.A.C.H Buddy Program, please speak with Bryan Sellitti in the clinic or call him at (757) 668-6754.

Save the Date

2019 Fantastic Winter Weekend

January 4 – 6, 2019

Any current or former cancer patient **age 13 to 25** is eligible to attend Special Love's Fantastic Winter Weekend, an off-site trip to a nearby winter sports resort to enjoy cold-weather activities like skiing, snowboarding, inner tubing, and sledding.

The cost is \$25 per person (scholarships are available) and includes all food, lodging, transportation, and ski or snowboarding costs. But of course, you can choose to simply enjoy the cozy fire and games inside the ski lodge at Bryce Ski Resort. For more information and to apply, visit SpecialLove.org or call (888) 930-2707.

Support

Parents and Caregivers Support Group

Tuesday, November 27, Noon – 1:30 p.m.

CHKD, 8th floor HemOnc conference room

Join other parents and caregivers of children with cancer for a support lunch. Please RSVP to Rebecca Ruck at (757) 668-9617 or Kelly Trejo at (757) 668-7931 to attend.

Education Corner

Hand-Washing: A Lesson in Infection Control

Fall is here, which means cooler weather, falling leaves, and yes ... the start of cold and flu season. Chemotherapy and radiation affect the body's ability to create white blood cells, and children receiving these treatments are at higher risk for infection when they are neutropenic (having a low white blood cell count). Although there are microscopic germs that live within your child's body that generally cause no harm, when their body is neutropenic, those germs can cause your child to get sick. There is generally no restriction of activities such as attending school while neutropenic, unless otherwise directed by your doctor. But the best thing you can do to help prevent infection caused by others is to teach your child the importance of good hand-washing.

A little science experiment can help with that. (Note: This can be messy, but have fun with it.) Have your child put their hands in glitter. Then have them wash their hands with plain water. They should see that although a good amount of glitter comes off, there is still quite a bit left on their hands. Now, have your child wash their hands with soap and water for at least 30 seconds, being sure to scrub all areas, including wrists. There should not be any more glitter!

Explain to your child that the specks of glitter are like germs – we cannot see them, but they are everywhere. When they do not wash their hands completely, the germs don't go away. The germs can then get in their mouth when they eat, eyes when they rub them, or nose when they blow it. Washing hands with soap and water after using the restroom, touching items used by multiple people, coughing or sneezing, and before eating is the best way to prevent infection.

Flu Season: What You Need to Know

Many children who are treated at the CCBDC have decreased ability to fight infections, and being exposed to others with flu-like symptoms can be extremely dangerous.

Flu-like symptoms include:

- A temperature of 101°F or greater.
- Upper respiratory tract symptoms, such as a cough, runny nose, congestion, or sore throat.
- Diarrhea, vomiting, or body aches.

If your child has flu-like symptoms and is scheduled for a non-urgent appointment, contact the clinic prior to arriving for the appointment. If your child is scheduled for chemotherapy, a transfusion, or a procedure in the infusion area, and is ill with flu-like symptoms or a fever, please contact your child's primary nurse at **(757) 668-7243** for instructions on how to proceed. The CCBDC staff needs to make sure that proper isolation procedures are used. In a worst-case scenario, we may need to reschedule or postpone some elective admissions and/or therapies.

If family members have flu-like symptoms, we ask that they do **NOT** come to the CCBDC unless absolutely necessary. Please remember to limit the number of people during your child's clinic appointment to one or two. **No siblings should accompany patients in the clinic, especially during flu season.**

Influenza (flu) vaccines are a great protection against the illness. All CHKD staff members are required to get the vaccine. CCBDC staff will receive the inactivated (injected) vaccine only. We highly recommend that all parents, siblings, and close contacts of our patients receive the inactivated flu shot vaccine.

