After receiving chemotherapy your blood counts may drop. The time of lowest blood cell counts is called the nadir. The drugs you were given and their nadir are listed below:

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<th>Drug</th>
<th>Nadir</th>
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It is very important that you get enough rest and eat nourishing foods. Eat protein foods like milk, eggs, cheese, and meats. Avoid “junk” foods. Also drink plenty of liquids, about 2-3 liters every day.

This instruction sheet will give you information on how to take care of yourself after your chemotherapy treatment.

**Prevent Infection**
- Wash your hands often—always before meals and after using the bathroom.
- Avoid persons with colds or any illnesses; avoid crowds and limit your visitors, particularly at the time of nadir. Report chills, fever, burning when you urinate, sore throat, and / or shortness of breath to your doctor.
- Avoid contact with potting soil and pet wastes.

**Skin Care**
- Avoid cuts and scratches by protecting yourself (such as using a thimble when sewing, or gloves when washing dishes.) Use an electric razor and do not go barefoot.
- Use lotion or oil on dry skin. Put oil on after your bath to prevent falls in the tub.
- Use sunscreen or clothing when in the sun (long sleeves, a hat.) For scratches, clean with soap and water. Cover small cuts with a bandaid.

**Mouth Care**
- Keep your mouth clean by brushing gently with a soft toothbrush after meals and at bedtime.
- Look at your mouth every day. Call your doctor if you have white patches or red areas.
- Do not wear dentures that don’t fit well.
- Use vaseline on your lips if they are dry or chapped.
- If your mouth is sore, gargle with warm salt water. Do not use commercial mouthwash with alcohol. Avoid spicy, hard foods, alcohol, and tobacco. Eat moist foods such as ice cream, pudding, and jello. You can put foods into a blender to make them smooth and easier to swallow.
- If you cannot eat because of mouth sores, call your doctor.

**Nausea**
- Dry foods like crackers, toast, and dry cereal may help.
- Slowly sip carbonated drinks.
- Eat slowly in small amounts.
- Avoid odors that bother you, such as food odors, perfumes, or smoke.
- Call your doctor if you have vomiting for more than two days.

**Diarrhea**
- Drink plenty of liquids.
- Slowly add foods low in fiber, such as rice, bananas, mashed potatoes, toast, and crackers.
- Avoid foods that may irritate your stomach, such as beans, cabbage, broccoli, nuts, spicy foods, and greasy foods.
- Call your doctor if you have diarrhea (more than three watery stools in a day) for more than two days.
- Clean your rectal area after each bowel movement with warm water and mild soap. Rinse well and pat dry. You can also use Desitin ointment or other similar creams for your rectal area.
Constipation
- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Increase fiber in your diet with foods such as bran, raw fruits and vegetables.
- Increase activity / exercise if possible.
- Avoid straining with bowel movements to prevent bleeding.
- Ask your doctor for a laxative if necessary.

Nosebleeds
- Do not blow your nose hard. If you do have a nosebleed, apply gentle, continuous pressure to your nose for 5-10 minutes. If it keeps bleeding, call your doctor.

Sexuality
- It is usually safe to have sex while you are receiving chemotherapy. The drugs cannot harm your partner. If your energy level is low, you may not desire sex as much. Sexual desire usually returns to normal levels after treatment is over.
- Women may have changes in their menstrual cycle during chemotherapy. Always use birth control throughout the course of chemotherapy and for six months after your treatments. You may experience some vaginal dryness. Use a water-based lubricant for intercourse (NOT oil-based, like vaseline.)
- Men receiving chemotherapy usually continue to have normal erections. Occasionally the treatments can interfere with erections by changing the balance of hormones. Hormone levels usually return to normal after treatment ends. Chemotherapy may damage sperm. Always use birth control throughout the course of chemotherapy and for six months after your treatments. Some chemotherapy may cause infertility. If you want to bank your sperm, discuss this with your doctor before treatment begins.

Medicines
- Do not take any medicine that has aspirin in it. Always check with your doctor before taking any over-the-counter medicines or herbs.

Symptoms to Report to Your Doctor
1. Fever of more than 100.5 degrees.
2. Intense pain in a new place, or pain that does not get better after taking pain medicine.
3. Burning when you urinate or blood in the urine.
4. Black stools or blood in the stools. Also, any other unusual bleeding.
5. If you are unable to eat or have vomiting.
6. Cough, chest pain, or shortness of breath.
7. Severe headache or a stiff neck
8. Constipation that does not improve after increasing fluid intake and roughage in your diet.