

## **Low White Blood Cell Count**

Radiation therapy and some chemotherapy drugs can cause low white blood cell count. White blood cells protect you against infection. When your white blood cell count is lower than normal, you are more at risk for infection.

### **Suggestions to help you reduce the risk of infection:**

- Wash your hands before eating, after coming home, and after using the restroom. (Remind family members to do the same.)
- Avoid people who have colds or other illness.
- Wash fresh fruits and vegetables well before eating. Your physician may ask you to avoid raw fruits and vegetables when your white blood cell count is low.
- If you have fresh flowers in your home or hospital room, have someone change the water every day.
- Avoid having dental work done unless approved by your doctor.
- Avoid rectal temperatures, enemas, suppositories, etc.
- Avoid swimming pools, whirlpools or hot tubs.
- Do not have any immunizations unless your doctor approves.
- Wear gloves when gardening and thoroughly wash your hand/nails when removed.

### **Call your physician:**

- If you have a temperature greater than 101.0° Fahrenheit and/or you have shaking chills.
- If you have a productive cough with yellow, greenish, or tan sputum.
- If you have pain and/or discomfort with urination.
- If you have redness, swelling, tenderness or drainage from a wound.