Doxorubicin for the Treatment of Cancer

**Doxorubicin** (Adriamycin®, Doxil®) is a medication used in the treatment of some cancers. This medication works by preventing cell growth by blocking reproduction.

Doxorubicin is injected into the vein (IV) by infusion or IV push.

Your doctor will give you a copy of your child's treatment protocol which will include information on the dose of the medication and when he will receive it.

**Special Instructions (unless otherwise instructed):**

- Doxorubicin can cause chemical burns if it comes in contact with the skin. If your child does not have a central line, an IV will be started each time a dose of this medication is given.
- Your child should wear protective clothing, a hat and sunscreen (SPF 30-45) when outdoors, as doxorubicin increases your child's risk for sunburn.
- Your child's heart function will be monitored frequently by EKG and echocardiogram while receiving this medication.
- The total dose of this medication your child receives will also be monitored. The potential for side effects increases with higher doses.

**Side Effects:**

The following side effects are common:

- Low white blood cell counts – increasing your child’s risk for infection
- Low platelet count – increasing your child’s risk for bleeding
- Red colored urine for 2 days after receiving this medication (due to the red color of the medication)
- Nausea and vomiting
- Mouth sores
- Hair loss

The following side effects are less common, but can occur:

- Change in color and texture of nails
- Heart muscle damage

**Call (816) 234-3000 and ask for the Hematology/Oncology nurse on call if your child has:**

- Fever of 101.5°F (38.5°C)
- Severe nausea and vomiting
- Mouth sores that prevent your child from eating or drinking
- Sore throat
- Bleeding or bruising