

OCTOBER 2017

## St. Jude 101: Parents sharing with parents

**P**arents from the St. Jude Family Advisory Council would like to help you make the most of your St. Jude journey. Their new program, St. Jude 101, is a parent-to-parent welcome for the newest St. Jude families. It is also for any parents and caregivers who want to learn more about support and services offered at St. Jude.

During St. Jude 101 parents from the Family Advisory Council share

personal stories and provide information caregivers need to help them feel more comfortable at the hospital. You will have time to ask questions and learn from other parents in an informal setting.

St. Jude 101 sessions will be held Wednesdays from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Look for dates and locations on posters and electronic boards around the hospital. You can also ask your social worker about St. Jude 101 or

call Patient Family-Centered Care at 901-595-5453.

Drinks and snacks will be served, and Helping Hands volunteers can provide child care activities as needed.

There is no need to register. Just show up and stay for as long as your schedule allows.

Topics that will be covered include: Who is managing my child's care; hospital services, campus highlights and support; keeping your child safe; patient and family-centered care; and managing concerns. The content should be valuable for any St. Jude parent or caregiver at any stage of treatment. Parents leading the discussion will not cover medical information or talk specifically about your child's diagnosis.

Come meet other parents and see what you can learn from their experiences.

## Finding the best way to use antibiotics

Antibiotics are medicines used to fight harmful bacteria in your body. Today, health care providers worldwide are working together to improve the way antibiotics are used. Some efforts try to reduce the use of antibiotics. Other programs focus on using safer medicines or avoiding antibiotic side effects. And some efforts are working to help ensure patients who need antibiotics get them as quickly as possible.

### Why is this important?

Antibiotics are often used at St. Jude. They are essential to caring for our patients. Unfortunately, antibiotic side effects can occur. They can be mild, like nausea or diarrhea, or more serious like allergic reactions or *Clostridium difficile* infection (C. diff).

Also, over time, some bacteria have become able to survive some antibiotics. This is called antibiotic resistance. Scientists have shown that this has increased because antibiotics have been generally overused.

Taking antibiotics increases the chance of infections caused by bacteria that resist antibiotics. Even so, antibiotics are often needed to prevent or treat infection.

Finding the best way to use antibiotics can help ensure patients only get the antibiotics that they need, and only for as long as they need them. This can reduce the risk of side effects and antibiotic resistance.

### How has St. Jude committed to using antibiotics responsibly?

St. Jude has developed a system to ensure the best use of antibiotics. This is called an Antimicrobial Stewardship Program. This program is led by Bill Greene, PharmD, and Shane Cross, PharmD, who are both clinical pharmacists, and Josh Wolf, MBBS, an infectious diseases doctor. It includes a team of clinical pharmacists, infectious diseases doctors, oncologists (cancer doctors), nurses and laboratory specialists. These people work hard to ensure that your doctors know the best antibiotics to use for different infections and conditions. They also help them understand when to avoid, stop using or choose better antibiotics. Doctors and other medical staff around St. Jude receive frequent education about antibiotics and antibiotic resistance.

### How can careful use of antibiotics help my child and me?

You or your child can be helped without ever knowing about it. Guidelines for preventing and treating infection are used by all St. Jude medical staff to make decisions about antibiotics. Your doctor may be contacted by a member of the St. Jude antimicrobial stewardship team to help improve your antibiotics.

### How can I learn more?

If you have questions about how antibiotics are used at St. Jude, ask your doctor or pharmacist. If you want more information, they can put you in touch with a member of the antimicrobial stewardship team.

## Tell the staff if you must step away from your child

Patient safety is a top priority at St. Jude. The staff asks that anytime you need to leave your child in the clinic, please tell a registered nurse that you must step away. Our clinics at St. Jude work the same as your local doctor's office. If you are bringing your child in for a visit, you are expected to remain with your child. Even when you have a volunteer watching your child, you still must tell a registered nurse caring for your child that you are stepping away. This is important in case something unexpected occurs with your child.

The staff understands that there are times when you might have to step away – to use the restroom or to care for another child that is with you. Providing the best care possible is our goal. To meet that goal, the staff needs to know if you leave your child in the clinic at any time during the visit.

If you have questions about this, please talk to your child's doctor or nurse.



# Talking about Medicines

## Safety tips for medicine patches

By Shane Cross, PharmD, Pharmaceutical Services

Medicine patches provide a unique way of delivering a drug—releasing it slowly through the skin over time. The most common patches used at St. Jude are for controlling pain, high blood pressure, and nausea and vomiting.

Below are some helpful tips to remember when your child is prescribed a medicine patch:

- Not all patches are alike, so you must read the information from the pharmacy carefully. Certain patches need to be changed every day, while others are changed once every 3 days or once weekly.
- Do not apply more than one patch at a time unless you are told to do so by your child's doctor.
- Most medicine patches should be removed before an MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) scan. Always check with your child's doctor, nurse or pharmacist before having an MRI.
- Be sure to dispose of old or unused patches. We recommend that you fold patches in half with the sticky sides together and flush them down a toilet.

If you have questions about medicine patches, please ask your child's doctor, nurse or pharmacist.

## Don't miss the Halloween celebration at St. Jude Tuesday, October 31

Let the trick-or-treating fun begin! Halloween at St. Jude has grown each year as the numbers of children and staff taking part have increased. Each year a group of employees from several departments looks for new ways to make the event fun and enjoyable for everyone. They also strive to continue improving crowd control, safety and security.

This year's hospital-wide Trick-or-Treat festivities for patients and siblings will be held Tuesday, October 31, from noon to 2 p.m. Hospital staff members will visit the rooms of inpatients in two shifts from 10 a.m. to noon for reverse trick-or-treating.

Here are some key things to remember for this year's Halloween celebration:

- **All children and families planning to trick-or-treat that day must first stop and pick up a candy bag and a map of the trick-or-treat route. Locations will be posted closer to the date.**
- **To ensure the safety and security of all patients and families, only patients on active treatment and their siblings are invited to take part in the trick-or-treat festivities.**
- **Please remember not to invite or bring outside friends or family.**

*St. Jude Parents* is published on the first of each month by Family-Centered Care Services and Biomedical Communications. Your questions and comments are important to us. **We want to print advice and tips from St. Jude parents to other St. Jude parents.**

To share your ideas or to receive this newsletter by email, please call or email Alicia Huettel, RN, MSN, at 901-595-5453 ([parents\\_newsletter@stjude.org](mailto:parents_newsletter@stjude.org)) or Lois Young ([lois.young@stjude.org](mailto:lois.young@stjude.org)). To subscribe to an online version of this newsletter or to learn more about *St. Jude Parents*, visit [www.stjude.org/parents-newsletter](http://www.stjude.org/parents-newsletter). St. Jude is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

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ATTENTION: If you speak another language, assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call 1-866-278-5833 (TTY: 1-901-595-1040).

ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-866-278-5833 (TTY: 1-901-595-1040).

تنبيه: إذا كنت تتحدث بلغة أخرى، فيمكنك الاستعانة بخدمات المساعدة اللغوية المتوفرة لك بالمجان. يرجى الاتصال بالرقم 1-866-278-5833 (الهاتف النصي: 1-901-595-1040).



## St. Jude Children's Research Hospital

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