

Therapeutic Phlebotomy

Appointment Information

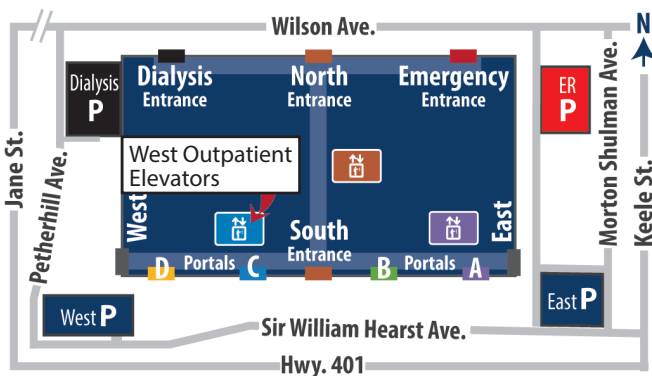
Your doctor has ordered a **therapeutic phlebotomy** for you. This handout explains what this is, why and how it is done, and what the side effects are.

Phlebotomy treatments are done in Medical Daycare.

If you have any questions about this treatment, please call Medical Daycare at (416) 242-1000 ext. 21300

Location:

Humber River Health,
Medical Daycare, Level 2,
1235 Wilson Ave., Toronto ON M3M 0B2



How to get here:

Medical Daycare is located on level 2. The closest entrance is Portal C, on the South side of the building. Take the West Outpatient Elevators to the 2nd floor.

What is a therapeutic phlebotomy?

A therapeutic phlebotomy is a procedure to remove a specific amount of blood from a vein in the patient's arm (intravenously). It is also called bloodletting.

Why is it done?

You may have a therapeutic phlebotomy to remove excess iron (a condition called hemochromatosis) or excess red blood cells (a condition called polycythemia vera) from the blood.

What do I bring to the hospital?

- Your health card (OHIP) and a photo ID.
- A list of all medicines you are taking, or the actual medicines in original containers. Include over-the-counter medicines, herbals and supplements.
- If you have known allergies, wear your Medic Alert® bracelet while in the hospital.
- If you normally use a walker, wheelchair, or cane, please bring it with you to the hospital.

Please do not bring any valuables.

How is the treatment done?

You may need a phlebotomy once a month or more often, depending on your blood results. Your doctor will tell you how often. Each treatment takes about 45 minutes to 1 hour.

On the day of the treatment:

- Make sure you eat a meal and drink extra fluids before your appointment. Your nurse will ask you to confirm this before your treatment.

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During the treatment, your nurse will:

1. Start an intravenous line (IV). The IV line will be attached to a blood collection bag.
2. Remove blood through the IV and into the collection bag. Your doctor will prescribe the amount of blood to be removed.
3. Make sure you drink fluids to keep you hydrated.
4. Watch your vital signs (heart rate, breathing, blood pressure, temperature, and oxygen).

At the end of the treatment, your nurse will:

- Remove your IV and put a gauze bandage on your arm.
- Check your vital signs.

What are the treatment side effects?

Side effects may include:

- Feeling dizzy or lightheaded
- General weakness
- Fatigue
- Pain at the IV site.

What can I expect after each treatment?

- You may feel weak, dizzy or faint after the procedure. We will ask you to stay seated or lie down until you feel you are able to get up gradually.
- Your nurse will watch for and treat possible side effects for 15 to 20 minutes after the procedure.

Please ask any questions that you have before you leave.



How do I care for myself after the treatment?

Puncture site:

- Do not remove the gauze bandage for at least 12 hours after the procedure.
- If you have any bleeding at the site, apply pressure to the site for at least 15 minutes.

Diet:

- Eat something once you are at home.
- Drink extra fluids to replace the fluid we removed during the phlebotomy.

Activity:

- For the first 1 to 2 hours after the treatment, do not smoke. Smoking may increase your chances of feeling dizzy.
- For the first 24 hours after the treatment:
 - Do not lift objects with the arm we used to take your blood.
 - Do not do any vigorous physical activity.
- If you feel faint while standing, lie down or sit down with your head between your knees for a few minutes.

Contact your doctor or go to the nearest emergency department if you have any of the following:

- Dizziness or fainting that does not go away.
- Phlebotomy site continues to bleed after applying pressure for 15 minutes.
- Chest pain.

