

Precautions for children of a bone marrow transplant patient

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Dear OncoLink "Ask The Experts,"

My brother is about to undergo a bone marrow transplant and he has a 5 year old daughter in kindergarten. We are considering pulling her out of kindergarten when he comes home for fear of her being sick and bringing it into the house with him. What is regularly advised as a precaution here? How can we best protect him? Would having her be at home but not interacting in school make a difference in the risks he takes?

[Selina M. Luger, MD](#), Director of the Leukemia Program and Assistant Professor of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania, responds:

We don't usually recommend taking children out of school or out of their environment. They should have a separate bathroom available for the patient and his daughter should be taught about careful hand washing. They can also have her set aside "home" clothes that she can change into when she gets home before she spends time with him. If she wants to play with friends after school, she can either go to their homes, or they can potentially designate a separate room in the house that is off-limits to the patient. And again she can change when she comes out of that room. Most important is strict hand washing. The daughter who is not sick should be allowed to live as normal a life as possible while taking appropriate precautions.

6/27/04

No