

# pet care

If you are receiving chemotherapy, you may be at an increased risk for developing an infection.


## GERMS AND YOUR PET

Studies have shown that pets can reduce stress and anxiety, and can help improve your overall mood. Normally, your immune system makes sure that germs carried by your pet do not make you sick, but when you are undergoing cancer treatment, your immune system is weaker than usual. During this time, there are a few things to consider when caring for your pet.

## CARING FOR YOUR PET

These steps may help prevent germs carried by your pet from entering your body through scratches on your skin or through contact with your mouth (either directly or indirectly from your hands):

- Protect your skin from direct contact with pet waste (urine or feces) by wearing vinyl or household cleaning gloves when cleaning up after your pet. Wash your hands immediately afterwards.
- Keep your cat's litter box away from eating areas. If possible, have someone else change the litter pan. If you must change the litter, wear vinyl or household cleaning gloves, and wash your hands immediately afterwards.
- Wash your hands with soap and water after playing with or caring for pets, especially before eating or handling food.
- Avoid being scratched or bitten by your pet. If you do get scratched or bitten, immediately wash the wounds well with soap and water.
- Stop your pet from licking your mouth or any open cuts or wounds you may have.
- Keep your pet clean and take your pet to the veterinarian for regular check-ups and vaccinations.
- During nadir — the period of time beginning 7–12 days after you finish each chemotherapy and lasting up to a week — is when you may be at the greatest risk for infection. If possible, you should avoid cleaning up after your pet. During this time, you might ask a friend or relative to take over these tasks.



If you have any questions please contact or  
make an appointment with our dietitian at

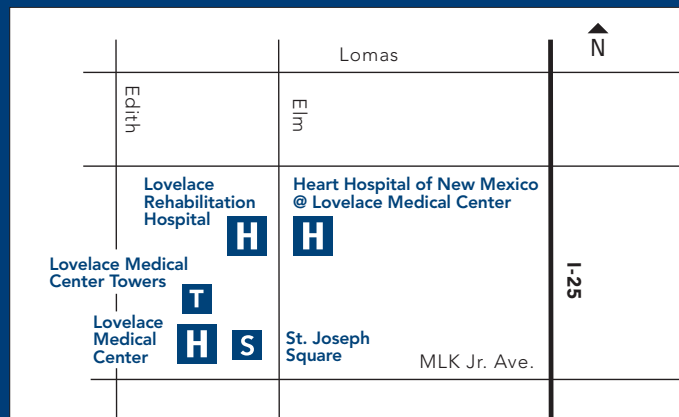
**505-727-3040.**



## About Us

With over 37 years of experience, Hematology Oncology Associates is committed to providing the best cancer care possible for their patients. Hematology Oncology Associates is a Quality Oncology Practice Initiatives (QOPI) certified site that demonstrates rigorous standards for quality cancer care and safety measures established by the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) and the Oncology Nursing Society (ONS).

We gladly accept most major insurance plans, including Blue Cross and Blue Shield, Molina Healthcare, TRICARE, UnitedHealthcare Community Plan, United Retiree Health Care Authority, Medicaid, Medicare, and many others.



## CONTACT US

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*We are located in the St. Joseph Square building on Lovace Medical Center's campus.*