

I Am Prescribed A Biologic: Important Considerations and Communicating with My Team

Biologic medications affect a person's immune system, making him/her immunosuppressed (prone to infection). It is important to call your Portland Gastro team if:

- You are sick
- You have a fever
- You have an infection
- You will be having surgery

In these situations, your Portland Gastro team **may advise the next dose of your biologic medication be postponed** until you are feeling better, without fever, and fully recovered from the infection and/or surgery. Continuing the biologic medication in these situations may prolong or complicate an illness, infection, and/or post operative healing.

Biologic medications often require a Prior Authorization from the insurance company and are shipped through a specialty pharmacy. For this reason, **we ask that you contact your Portland Gastro team 4 weeks in advance of when you expect to need a refill or run out of your medication**. If your team is not notified in advance, you may not receive your medication in time, which increases the risk of flare.

It is important that you have an **office visit at least once per year** so that your team can obtain an update on your overall health, assess response to your medication, screen for any adverse effects, and obtain labs (blood tests) that are typically required to continue to prescribe your biologic medication.

We encourage regular health screenings with your primary care provider. **If you are being treated for an illness or infection, or are prescribed an antibiotic, please have your primary care provider notify us**. We will determine if your biologic medication needs to be postponed. It also facilitates continuity of care, collaboration, and improved health outcomes.