

## Gardening and Housekeeping

### Gardening

During your nadir, the period of time beginning 7–12 days after you finish each chemotherapy dose—and possibly lasting for 5–7 days—is when you may be at the greatest risk for infection.

During this time you should consider avoiding gardening. At other times during your cancer treatment, gardening is a good way to get outside for some fresh air. Many people find gardening relaxing and enjoyable.

Here are a few things you should consider when gardening:

- Wearing gardening gloves can protect your hands and help to avoid cuts and scrapes. Be especially careful around roses or other plants with sharp thorns. Your skin is your first defense against infection, and any breaks in the skin create an opportunity for germs to enter your body.
- Wearing gardening gloves also protects your hands from direct contact with soil, which can contain bacteria and mold. After gardening, be sure to wash your hands with soap and water.

### Housekeeping and Disinfecting

Keeping up with your household chores is always a challenge. It can be even harder when you are not feeling well. If possible, don't do household chores if you don't feel well. It is better to rest if you are tired or not feeling well, as this will help your body recover from chemotherapy. If you do want to do housekeeping, there are a couple of easy tips you can follow to keep your house clean and lower your chance of picking up germs.

You can use disinfectants, such as sprays and wipes, to kill germs on the following places:

- Kitchen counter tops and floors, especially before and after food preparation
- Refrigerator door handles
- Telephones
- Door knobs and handles
- Bathroom counter tops and floors