

**Provincial Guideline:
Height and Weight Measurement & Documentation for Oncology Patients
(ADULT ONLY)**

Task: Collection and Documentation of Height and Weight for Oncology Patients	Page: 1 of 4
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Issuing Authority: Elaine Warren, Director Cancer Care Program Dr. Jehan Siddiqui Clinical Chief, Cancer Care Program	

Overview:

An oncology patient’s height and weight are important clinical assessment parameters for determining overall health, treatment planning and response to treatment.

Accurate height and weight are used by physicians and pharmacists for chemotherapy dose calculation. Safe and effective dosing of chemotherapy is reliant on an accurate weight since weight is a factor involved in most chemotherapy dose calculations. Changes in weight can have a large impact on treatment dosing and could seriously impact patient’s outcomes. Accurate collection and documentation of a patient’s height and weight is crucial in patient assessment and treatment planning

Guideline:

Accurate collection and documentation of a patient’s height and weight is crucial in patient assessment and treatment planning.

When to obtain measurements:

- Height and weight for all new patients.
- Height and weight prior to the beginning of the first cycle of chemotherapy.
- Weight prior to each cycle of chemotherapy; if a patient is being treated for Multiple Myeloma- Height and Weight must be obtained prior to each cycle of chemotherapy.
- Weight during each follow up visit for all disease sites excluding non- malignant dermatology.
- When warranted by clinical assessment.

Purpose:

The purpose of this guideline is to provide information to ensure height and weight measurements are collected and documented in a consistent and reliable manner.

Procedure:

Obtaining Height

When taking measurements of height:

1. Instruct the patient to remove their:
 - Footwear
 - Hats
2. Instruct patients to:
 - Stand on base plate of the scale with back to the measuring apparatus
 - Feet together, heels against measuring apparatus and knees straight
 - Look straight forward (do not tilt head up or down)
3. The patient's eyes and ears must be level (an imaginary line can be drawn from the bottom of the eye socket to the external opening of the ear). The back of their feet, calves, buttocks, shoulders and the back of their head should be in contact with the stand. The patient's feet should be positioned directly underneath the drop down measuring device.
4. Lower the measuring arm gently down onto the highest point of the patient's head and ask the patient to breathe in and stand tall.
5. Read the height in centimeters at the exact point (to the nearest 0.1cm).
6. Document height at point of care (**record in centimeters**).

Important Points

- If patient is unable to follow above procedure have patient lay flat on bed and measure with a measuring tape from top of head to bottom of heel.
- Be familiar with the manufacturer's recommendations for the equipment you are using. Most product manuals are available on-line at the manufacturer's website.
- Report faulty equipment immediately to your manager or supervisor to arrange repair with Biomedical Services.

Obtaining Weight

The Cancer Care Program recommends purchase of electronic weigh scales.

- Weight is obtained using electronic scales that are calibrated regularly.
- The electronic scale will be **locked in the kilogram mode**.

When taking measurements of weight:

1. Ask the patient to remove any “heavy” items from their pockets (keys, wallets, etc.) and to remove coats, sweaters, and footwear.
2. Assess for presence of prosthesis. If possible have the patient remove prosthesis prior to being weighed. (See important points for what do to if patient is unable to remove prosthesis).
3. Set the scales to zero (where applicable).
4. Ask the patient to step onto the scale and stand still over the center of the scale with their body weight evenly distributed between both feet. The patient’s arms should be hanging freely by the sides of the body, with the palms facing the thighs.
5. Wait for the screen to lock in patient’s weight before recording the measurement in **kilograms**.
6. Weight must be documented at point of care.

Important Points

- If patient is unable to be weighed on existing scales (i.e. exceeds weight capacity, unable to stand), arrange for a patient to be weighed on an alternate scale
- If the patient wears a prosthesis:
 - weigh the patient with the prosthesis on;
 - have patient step off scale and weigh the prosthetic device separately;
 - subtract the weight of the prosthesis from the patient’s total weight;
 - document the weight of the patient without the prosthesis.
 - record the weight of the prosthesis;
 - ask the patient, with each weight measurement, if their prosthesis has changed.

Recording Height and Weight

- Document height (centimeters) and weight measurements (kilograms) on the appropriate documentation form.

Reporting Weight Changes

- If the patient experiences a **10% weight gain or loss** (or greater) from baseline (the most recent chemotherapy letter) notify the physician.

Patient Declines to Have Height/Weight Measured:

- If a patient refuses to be weighed or refuses to remove heavy clothing or footwear that may impact weight measurement, report this to patient's physician and document same in health record.
- If patient refuses to have height measured, report this to patient's physician and document same in health record.

Obtaining and Reporting Height and Weight during Tele-oncology/Video-Conference:

- Health Care Professional in peripheral site will obtain height and weight as outlined in this policy.
- Health Care Professional will document the measurements, date and time on appropriately patient identified documentation tool and fax a copy to the physician.
- Oncologist will enter the data in ARIA (under the Vital Signs window) and send faxed copy of the data to Health Records for scanning.

Supporting Documents/Linkages:

- Buck, M. (2014) In: Fundamentals of Canadian Nursing: Concepts, Process & Practice. pp: 603-604. Pearson. Toronto.
- Eastern Health, Cancer Care Program (June 2015). *Guideline for the Ordering, Preparation and Administration of Chemotherapy*. Retrieved April 1, 2017 from <http://www.easternhealth.ca/WebInWeb.aspx?d=2&id=1727&p=1485>

Contact Information:

For more information on this guideline, please contact:
Lori Manuel, Provincial Program Manager (709)777-8924 or
Email: Lori.Manuel@EasternHealth.ca