

# What is graft versus host disease?

• Graft versus host disease, or GVHD, can be a side effect after you receive donated stem cells. It happens because the new, healthy cells come from a different immune system than your own.



## What is graft versus host disease?

- A healthy immune system attacks cells that are not its own. In GVHD, the new immune system attacks your body.
- GVHD is common. About half the people who have stem cell transplants get it. It can happen soon after transplant (acute GVHD) or later (chronic GVHD).



### About acute GVHD

Acute GVHD happens fairly soon after your transplant, in the first 100 days. This is about 3 months. It usually affects the skin, digestive system and liver.



### About chronic GVHD

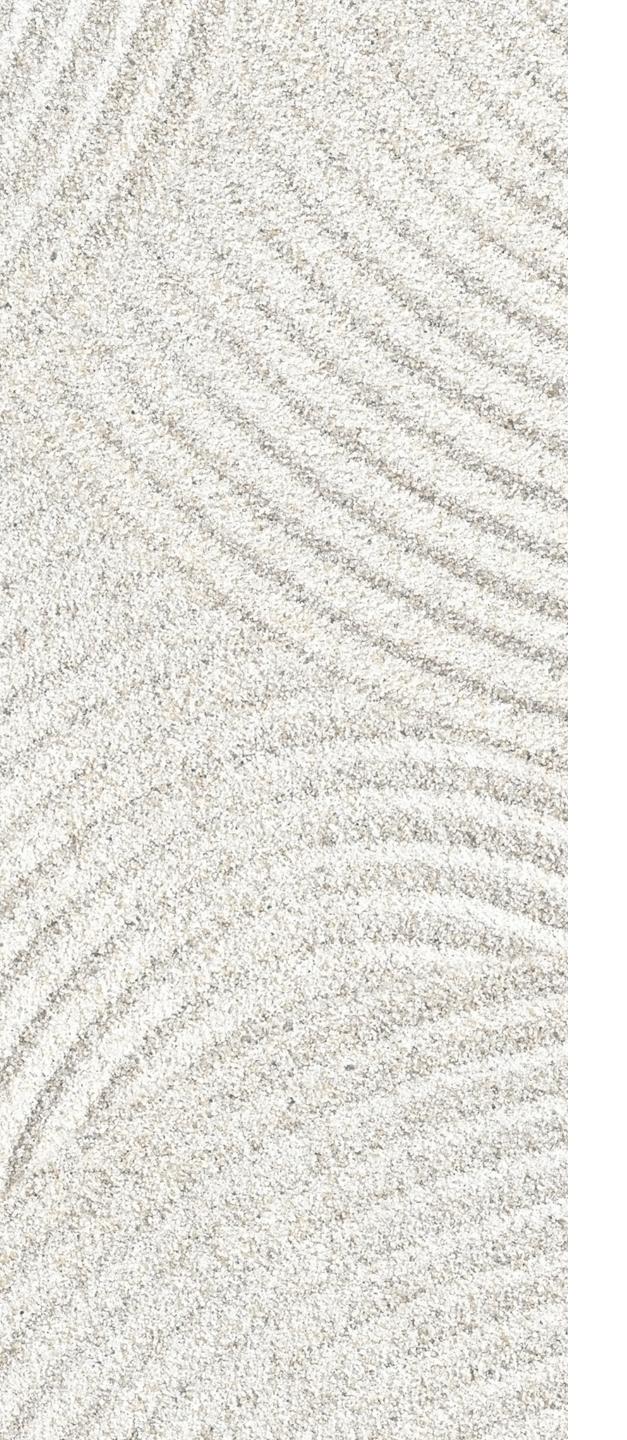
Chronic GVHD happens more than 100 days after your transplant. This is about 3 months. It usually affects the skin, liver, eyes and lungs.



# Medications that suppress your immune system

Your transplant team will prescribe medication to treat GVHD. These may include:

- Methotrexate
- Cyclosporine or tacrolimus
- Prednisone or methylprednisolone
- Mycophenolate



### Immune system medications

Please do not take these medications on days you come to the clinic. We will check your dose at your appointment. Then we will let you know if it needs to be changed.



# Foods that may affect your medication

Some foods can affect how well your medications work. Tacrolimus and cyclosporine are especially likely to be affected. Please avoid the foods listed next.



# Foods that may affect your medication Foods to avoid

- Grapefruit and grapefruit juice
- Seville oranges Ask a grocery store worker if you are not sure what type they are.
- Starfruit
- Pomelo
- Pomegranates and drinks with pomegranate juice

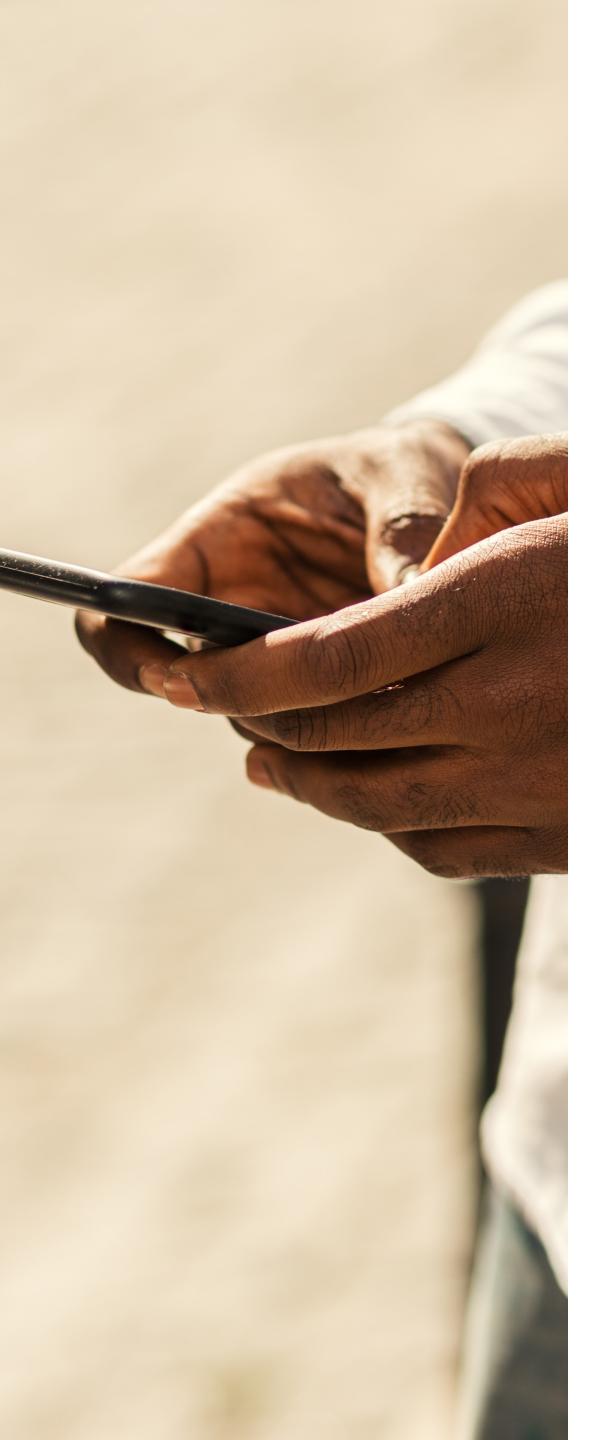
It is OK to eat regular (navel) oranges, lemons and limes.



### Possible side effects of GVHD medications

Medications to prevent GVHD can cause side effects. These can include:

- Changes in thinking or memory
- Dry mouth
- Changes in your bones They can become thinner, weaker and more likely to break. You can develop a condition called "osteoporosis."



### Phone numbers to remember

- Hematologic Malignancies Clinic at CHH2
  Triage Nurse 503-418-0669\*
  - If your caregiver becomes sick, please call the triage line for advice on how to stay safe
    Clinic Scheduling 503-494-5058

<sup>\*</sup>This phone number will connect you to the on-call physician when the clinic is closed.

## Thank you!

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#### TRANSPLANT THERAPY - COMPLICATIONS OF ALLO TRANSPLANTS

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