

## Immunotherapy Nursing Process: Immune-Mediated Adverse Events

Immunotherapy checkpoint inhibitors can cause immune-mediated adverse events that can cause serious and even life-threatening side effects. Early recognition and prompt intervention is essential to avoid progression of symptoms.

**\*This document is a quick reference guide. Refer to individual BC Cancer immunotherapy protocols and treatment handouts as your source of truth.**

### Special Considerations Prior to Treatment

Patient Location – distance to healthcare facility

Patient health literacy level

Ability and willingness to report symptoms in a timely manner

Necessary home supports in place

### Patient Education

Review and provide handouts:

- [Immunotherapy Alert Card](#)
- [Immunotherapy patient letter](#)
- [SCIMMUNE patient handout](#)
- Drug / Protocol patient handout
- Provide local Helpline numbers
- Discuss possible side effects and importance of reporting in timely manner
- Discuss pseudo-progression and timeline of tumour response

[BC Cancer Symptom Management Guidelines](#) are to be used to guide nursing assessment and interventions.

**A comprehensive nursing assessment, with particular focus on immune-mediated adverse events will be completed as per treatment protocol, drug monograph, and [SCIMMUNE](#) symptom specific flow diagrams for immune-mediated toxicity management.**

Potential immune-mediated adverse reactions include pneumonitis, enterocolitis, hepatitis, nephritis, significant endocrine changes, skin toxicities, and neurologic toxicities.

**Common symptoms of immune-mediated adverse events include:**

- **Fatigue**
- **New or worsening dyspnea/cough**
- **Rash**
- **Diarrhea**
- **Neuropathy**

Any symptoms identified should be investigated further and treated in a timely manner according to SCIMMUNE algorithms in conjunction with the patients' health care team.

**If the patient is required to attend Emergency or their family physician, instruct the patient to present their immunotherapy alert card, patient letter, and any other relevant patient handouts.**

### Documentation

All assessments will be documented by BC Cancer staff using NCI CTCAE grading. Include focus charting (DARP) as necessary per NCI CTCAE procedure.

Nurses at CON sites will document their assessments per local health authority standards.