



# PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

**CONTROLLING DELAYED  
DIARRHOEA WHILE RECEIVING  
IRINOTECAN**

## Controlling Delayed Diarrhoea While Receiving Irinotecan

Sometimes patients can develop diarrhoea following Irinotecan. It is important to control diarrhoea as soon as possible. The longer diarrhoea continues, the more difficult it is to stop. Diarrhoea following Irinotecan can be very dangerous. Loose or frequent stools or cramping are the first signs of diarrhoea.

**Take diarrhoea medicine only when you have diarrhoea.**

### Taking Loperamide

Take two 2-mg capsules of Loperamide at the first sign of diarrhoea. Then take one capsule after every episode of diarrhoea up to a maximum of 8 tablets in 24 hours. You should also take rehydration salts following each episode of diarrhoea, for example 'Dioralyte'. If you have more than 4 episodes of diarrhoea in 24 hours you **MUST** contact the hospital on the numbers below. This protocol should not be used for any longer than 48 hours.

Stop taking Loperamide when you are free of diarrhoea for at least 12 hours. Do not take other non-prescription medications for diarrhoea without your doctor's permission.

### Drink Plenty of Clear Fluids

Drink 8 to 12 eight-ounce glasses (2-3 litres) of clear fluids. Clear fluids include water, broth and sports drinks (e.g. Lucozade Sport). You may also drink fizzy drinks without 'fizz', for example, flat 7-UP. (to get rid of fizz, open the bottle and let it stand until the carbonation is gone.)



## **Avoid Milk, Fruit Juice, Smoothies, Vegetable Soup, Alcohol and Coffee**

Continue to avoid these foods and drinks until one week after the diarrhoea has gone. Lactose free milk can provide a good substitute for milk and will not increase your diarrhoea.

## **Follow the BRAT diet (Bananas, Rice, Applesauce, and Toast)**

Once you eat bananas, rice applesauce and toast without experiencing diarrhoea, the progress to eating a bland, low fibre diet, for example, white chicken meat without skin, scrambled eggs, crackers, white bread and noodles without sauce. You may also try eating canned or cooked fruits without skin. If needed, we may refer you to a dietitian.

### **Call the Hospital if:**

- You have a fever (temperature of 38C or higher)
- You are taking Loperamide and your diarrhoea does not go away within 24 hours, or you have more than 4 episodes in 24 hours
- You have bloody stools or mucus in your stool
- You think you are loosing more fluids than you are taking in
- If your skin becomes less elastic or your eyes, mouth or skin are dry or your urine becomes darker in colour- These are signs of dehydration

### **Contact Numbers:**

Oncology Liaison Nurse: 0214801634 or 0214801639  
St. Bernadette's 0214801676