

Diarrhea

Treatment of Diarrhea from Cancer Treatment

Some chemotherapy can cause diarrhea. Diarrhea is any increase in the number of stools per day and/or an increase in the amount of watery fluid in your stool. If left untreated, diarrhea can cause dehydration, weakness, weight loss, rectal soreness, and poor nutrition.

- Drink at least eight 8 oz. cups (64 oz.) of fluid each day to prevent dehydration, unless told not to by your healthcare team. All non-caffeinated beverages count toward fluid intake.
- Avoid laxative(s) even if it is part of your normal medicine routine
- Avoid foods high in fiber (beans, corn, broccoli, and high fiber bran-based breads and cereals)
- Avoid foods high in fat (fried foods, rich or heavy desserts, or oily sauces)
- Limit foods that contain lactose (milk products, cheese)
- Avoid spicy foods (hot peppers, hot sauce)
- Avoid caffeine (coffee, tea, cola, cocoa, chocolate)
- Avoid alcohol
- Ask your healthcare team for the “low fiber, high protein” document

If you develop diarrhea, follow the instructions that best describes your stool below:

If your stool is **VERY SOFT** but still has some form:

1. Take 1 loperamide (Imodium®) tablet **after each stool** that looks like diagram 5 or 6 on the Stool Chart.
2. If this type of stool continues for more than 24 hours **after starting Imodium®**, contact your healthcare team.
3. Do **not** take more than 8 tablets (16mg) in a 24-hour time period.

If your **STOOL IS LOOSE, VERY LOOSE OR IS LIKE LIQUID** - applesauce or watery:

1. Take 2 Imodium® tablets immediately after the first loose stool that looks like diagram 7 on the Stool Chart.
2. Take 1 Imodium® tablet every 2 hours, for a total of 12 hours.
3. The goal is that you have no diarrhea for 12 hours.
4. If you have diarrhea at any time during these 12 hours, note the time of your diarrhea. You must now use this time as the beginning of a new 12- hour period. Repeat the instructions from the beginning and contact your healthcare team.

5. During the night, you do not need to wake up every 2 hours to take the Imodium[®] tablet. Instead, set your alarm for every 4 hours and take 2 Imodium[®] tablets. To maintain control of the diarrhea, it is important that you continue to take the Imodium[®] tablets during the night, even if you have no diarrhea for several hours.
6. If you experience weakness, lightheadedness or dizziness, contact your healthcare team.

Use the table below to help keep track of the amount of **loperamide (Imodium®)** you are taking.

[illegible]

The Bristol Stool Form Scale

Type 1		Separate hard lumps, like nuts (hard to pass)
Type 2		Sausage-shaped but lumpy
Type 3		Like a sausage but with cracks on its surface
Type 4		Like a sausage or snake, smooth and soft
Type 5		Soft blobs with clear-cut edges (passed easily)
Type 6		Fluffy pieces with ragged edges, a mushy stool
Type 7		Watery, no solid pieces ENTIRELY LIQUID

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If you are in need of immediate assistance, please call 732-235-2465 and select the option that best meets your needs.