

**Management of Diarrhea due to Irinotecan
Parent/Patient Handout**

Dear Parent/Patient:

Your child is receiving Irinotecan as part of their chemotherapy. This drug can cause severe diarrhea. The following tips can help your child cope with diarrhea:

- 1) BUY LOPERAMIDE (also known as Imodium®). You should have this medication at home before your child's first chemotherapy treatment. You can get this at any local pharmacy. Loperamide comes in a variety of forms (liquid, caplets, dissolving tablets). Please read the label CAREFULLY and BRING your MEDICATION to your FIRST chemotherapy appointment
- 2) Please document your child's bowel habits BEFORE treatment starts. This is so you can compare your child's bowel habits before and after treatment, and help you recognize diarrhea promptly. **Please record the following:**

_____ bowel movements per day OR _____ bowel movements per week

Stool usually appears:

_____ HARD _____ LOOSE _____ FORMED _____ SOFT _____ WATERY

- 3) AFTER your child's chemotherapy has started, please record the following:
Number of bowel movements per day _____ Is this an increase in number of stools? _____
When did it start? _____
Stool appears: HARD _____ LOOSE _____ FORMED _____ SOFT _____ WATERY _____

- 4) AFTER your child's chemotherapy has started, at the FIRST SIGN of diarrhea be sure to START taking LOPERAMIDE. Please give as follows and ensure your MD/NP has completed this section:

Child's weight _____ kg

First dose (please give after the FIRST loose stool): _____

Then give: _____ EVERY _____ hours while awake

AND _____ EVERY _____ while sleeping

DO NOT EXCEED _____ PER DAY

***ONCE DIARRHEA has stopped for 12 hours, you can STOP giving loperamide**

***if using liquid form of medication please confirm dosing with your MD/NP as concentration of medication may differ depending on what brand**

- 5) **Call your doctor or oncology team if your child is still having diarrhea after taking loperamide for 24 hours, or if there is fever, nausea/vomiting, or any questions**

OTHER HELPFUL TIPS:

- Drink plenty of Gatoraide, broth, clear soups or water
- Eat small meals that are gentle on your stomach. Ex: bananas, rice, applesauce, toast, white meat chicken (no skin), canned fruits
- Avoid fatty, greasy foods, spicy foods, high fiber foods, beans, or foods containing dairy
- Avoid milk, coffee, alcohol, or drinks containing caffeine
- Ensure perianal area is kept clean and dry to prevent irritation
- Clean perianal area with mild soap and warm water after each bowel movement
- Allow skin to dry completely, may use a barrier cream for comfort/protection
- Avoid use of laxatives (peg flakes, lactulose, senekot, docusate)