



Diarrhea Management during Your Treatment

Diarrhea is a common problem experienced by many patients and can be caused by chemotherapy, radiation, surgery, stress or antibiotics. Please do not be afraid or embarrassed to call your doctor or nurse at any time. If left untreated the diarrhea may get worse.

When to report your diarrhea

- Fever 100.4 F or higher with diarrhea.
- If you still have diarrhea 24 hours after starting Imodium AD
- If there is blood present

Over the Counter medication management

- If 3 or more loose stools in a day, take Imodium AD 2 tabs with the first dose and 1 tab with each diarrhea stool thereafter. Max 8 tabs in a 24 hour period.
- **If you are on Irinotecan**, with your FIRST episode of diarrhea:
 - 1st dose – take 2 tabs of Imodium (4mg) then during the day take 1 tab every 2 hours. At bedtime take 2 tabs then as needed at night.
 - Continue taking Imodium until you have been free of diarrhea for 12 hours

Drink plenty of fluids

- Drink 8-10 large glasses of liquids a day unless restricted by a physician. In addition, to replace those lost by diarrhea drink 6-8 ounces of adult electrolytes or juices with each loose stool. Drink small quantities at a time slowly.
- Water should only be part of the 8-10 glasses a day as it does not replace minerals.
- Jell-O is a good source of fluids
 - Clear soup or broth replaces lost salt
- Gatorade replaces lost salt and potassium

Eat small meals often

Eat small amounts of soft bland low fiber foods frequently.

- Foods easy to digest – chicken (white meat without the skin), turkey or mild white fish, steamed rice, crackers, white breads, pasta noodles without sauce and canned or cooked fruits without skins.
- Foods high in potassium – bananas, apricots without skin, peach nectar, potatoes without skin, broccoli, halibut, mushrooms, asparagus, nonfat milk.
- A good choice is the BRAT diet: **B** – bananas – helps replace lost nutrients, **R** – rice – easily digested and binding because it is a starch, **A** – apple sauce – provides sugars for energy, **T** – toast – easy to tolerate and binding because it is a starch.

Avoid items that can make diarrhea worse:

- Fatty, fried, greasy or spicy foods
- High fiber foods: bran, whole grain cereals, dried fruit, fruit skins, popcorn, nuts and vegetables
- Foods that cause gas: Beer, beans, cabbage carbonated drinks.
- Caffeinated, carbonated, very hot or very cold drinks
- Lactose-containing products, supplements or alcohol