

Irinotecan (Camptosar®)

How does this medicine work?

Irinotecan (eye-ri-noh-tee-kan) destroys cancer cells by interfering with a specific phase of cell life.

How is it given?

Irinotecan is given by intravenous (into the vein) infusion.

What are the side effects?

- Common
- fatigue (tiredness)
 - low blood cell counts
 - sweating
 - increased saliva
 - severe diarrhea (see diarrhea management on the back of this page)
 - nausea, vomiting
 - loss of appetite
 - belly pain/cramping
 - hair loss
- Occasional
- pain at injection site
- Rare
- change in liver function
 - change in kidney function
 - rash
 - itching of the skin
 - redness and warmth in the face
 - mouth sores

When should I call the doctor?

- fever, chills
- diarrhea (more than 4 stools a day)
- mouth sores

What else do I need to know?

All caregivers should wear gloves when handling urine, stool, and vomit while your child is receiving the chemotherapy and for 48 hours afterward. Urine, stool, and vomit can be safely disposed of in septic tanks and the sewer system.

Any clothing or bed linens that are contaminated with urine, stool, or vomit should be washed separately from other laundry in hot water and detergent. Anyone handling the contaminated laundry should wear gloves.

Blood counts are lowest 10 to 21 days after the medicine is given.

Be sure to follow the instructions in the next section, “Loperamide (Imodium) for managing diarrhea after irinotecan.”

Good mouth care will help prevent mouth sores.

You and your child should know the names of all the medicines he or she is taking.

Share this information with anyone involved in your child’s care.

Check with the doctor, nurse practitioner, or pharmacist before giving **any** other prescription or non-prescription medicines, herbs, or vitamins.

Questions?

This sheet is not specific to your child but provides general information. If you have any questions, please call the oncology clinic or pharmacy.

Loperamide (Imodium®)

For managing diarrhea after irinotecan

How does this medicine work?

Loperamide (loe-**per**-a-mide) is an anti-diarrheal medicine.

These instructions are to be used **only** for diarrhea that occurs after irinotecan is given, not for any other diarrhea.

How do I give the loperamide?

Do not give loperamide before your child receives the irinotecan infusion.

Be aware of your child's bowel movements. At the first sign that they are softer than usual or if your child has any increase in the number of bowel movements, begin giving loperamide.

If your child does not start taking the loperamide right away, the diarrhea may become severe and last several days or require hospital treatment.

Please follow these instructions carefully:

Give _____ (___mg)
at the first sign of diarrhea.

Continue giving _____ (___mg)
every 2 hours during the day, and

_____ (___mg)
every 4 hours during the night until the
normal pattern of bowel movements returns.

Do not give more than 16 mg (8 caplets or 80 ml) in 24 hours.

If the diarrhea returns, repeat the same doses and frequency.

What are the side effects of loperamide?

- weakness
- drowsiness
- dizziness

When should I call the doctor?

- no urine for 8 hours
- weakness
- drowsiness
- dizziness
- diarrhea does not stop

What else do I need to know?

While your child is taking loperamide, make sure you give lots of fluids such as:

- water
- 100% fruit juice (not apple or pear)
- soup

Loperamide can be given on an empty or full stomach. Do not give your child any laxatives without consulting the doctor.

Questions?

If you have any questions, please call the oncology clinic.

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