

Managing Diarrhoea during treatment with Capecitabine

Diarrhoea can be any of the following symptoms:

- Several extra bowel movements each day – more often (4 or more), looser and more of it than is normal for you.
- Bowel motions are very watery or much more watery stoma contents than normal or emptying your stoma bag more often.
- Bad cramps in your tummy.
- You pass watery bowel motions in the middle of the night.
- You need to really rush to the toilet to prevent incontinence or cannot make it in time.

If you also have any of the following symptoms then you **MUST** stop your capecitabine and phone for advice:

- High temperature of 37.5°C or above.
- You are also being sick or feeling so sick you are not able to drink much.
- You have ulcers on your lips or mouth that are making it difficult to drink or eat.
- You have a new skin rash.
- You have chest pain.

First episode of diarrhoea

If you have a loose or watery bowel movement then take 2 loperamide tablets (you were given these with your chemotherapy tablets). Take 2 tablets after the first loose bowel motion and 1 tablet after each loose bowel motion after that. Drink plenty. If you are otherwise well and your diarrhoea settles, keep taking your capecitabine tablets.

Further diarrhoea

If your diarrhoea continues, you have 4 or more loose/watery large bowel motions in 24 hours or other symptoms listed above, then follow the advice below.

- 1) Stop taking your capecitabine tablets.
- 2) Check your temperature.
- 3) Contact the **Cancer Treatment Helpline (0800 917 7711)**.
- 4) If you have further episodes of diarrhoea then **take one loperamide after each episode of diarrhoea** up to a maximum of 8 tablets in 24 hours. Fill in the number of tablets and times in the table, to keep a record and so that you don't forget.
- 5) Drink plenty of fluids: 2-3 litres of water or other fluids (e.g. soup or sweet drinks) daily. If you are unable to drink enough or take your medicines **please contact the Cancer Treatment Helpline immediately**.
- 6) If the diarrhoea has **not settled after 24 hours** you should call the **Cancer Treatment Helpline** again.
- 7) If the diarrhoea **lasts for 48 hours or more**, you will probably need to come into hospital to be seen.
- 8) If at any time your diarrhoea is severe, if you cannot drink enough, you are vomiting, you develop lip/mouth ulcers or you have a temperature over 37.5 then **it is very important that you contact the Cancer Treatment Helpline immediately so that you can be checked over**. You may need to be admitted to hospital.
- 9) **Do not start taking capecitabine tablets again** until your symptoms have settled and your cancer specialist team has told you that you can.

Temperature _____

Day and time loperamide taken	Number of loperamide tablets/capsules taken

If you need to see your doctor or come to hospital, please bring this sheet with you and show it to the doctors/nurses.

Cancer Treatment Helpline phone number: 0800 917 7711