**Temozolomide (Temodar®)**
(“te moe ZOE loe mide”)

**How drug is given:** by mouth

**Purpose:** To kill cancer cells in the brain and treat other cancers

**How to take the drug by mouth**

- This drug can be taken with or without food. If you take it with food, you should _always_ take it with food. If you take it on an empty stomach, you should _always_ take it on an empty stomach. Taking it before a meal or at bedtime may decrease nausea.

- Swallow each capsule whole; do not chew them. If you are unable to swallow the capsule, the pharmacist will give you specific instructions.

- If you miss a dose, take it as soon as possible. However, if it is almost time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your regular dosing schedule. **Do not double dose.**

**Storage**

- Store this medicine at room temperature, away from heat and moisture. Keep this medicine in its original container, out of the reach of children and pets.

**Things that may occur during treatment**

1. Nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite, and/or stomach pain may occur. Nausea and vomiting may begin soon after the drug is given and may last more than 24 hours. Drugs to help with this will be given to you.

2. Your blood cell counts may drop. This is known as bone marrow suppression. This includes a decrease in your:
   - Red blood cells, which carry oxygen in your body to help give you energy
   - White blood cells, which fight infection in your body
   - Platelets, which help clot the blood to stop bleeding

   If you have a **fever of 100.5°F (39°C) or higher**, chills, a cough, or any bleeding problems, tell your doctor or nurse **right away**.
3. You may get mouth sores 7 to 10 days after this drug is started. It is important to keep your mouth clean. Use a soft-bristle toothbrush when brushing your teeth. You may have a burning feeling and redness inside the mouth or on the lips. Use a **baking soda mouth rinse** 4 or 5 times a day.

   **Mouth Rinse Recipe:**
   Mix: 1 tsp **salt or baking soda** with 8 oz. glass of **water**

   Other mouth rinses may be ordered by your doctor. Do not use mouth washes that have alcohol in them, because they will dry out the mouth. If you cannot eat or swallow because of this, let your doctor or nurse know. Check with your doctor before having any dental work done.

4. Skin changes, such as dryness or a rash on your body, may occur. Ask your doctor or nurse what lotions or creams you may use.

5. Loose stools or diarrhea may occur. You may take loperamide (Imodium A-D®) to help control diarrhea. You can buy this at most drug stores. It is also important to drink more fluids (water, juice, sports drinks). If these do not help, tell your doctor or nurse.

6. Mild constipation may occur after treatment begins. Please increase your fluid intake and get more fiber in your diet by eating fresh fruits and vegetables. A daily stool softener, such as docusate (Colace®) and/or laxatives such as senna (Senakot®), may be helpful. If these do not help within 48 hours, tell your doctor or nurse. Do not use bulk forming laxatives, such as Metamucil®, without talking with your doctor or nurse.

7. You may get a headache. Please talk to your doctor or nurse about what you can take for this.

8. Your body may not be able to get rid of extra fluid. This is called edema. You may notice some swelling in your arms or legs.

9. Some patients may feel very tired, also known as fatigue. You may need to rest or take naps more often. Mild to moderate exercise may also help you maintain your energy. Talk with your doctor or nurse.

10. You may get some hair thinning.

11. It is very important to use birth control if you are having sex, because this drug could be harmful to an unborn baby. Women should not breast-feed while receiving temozolomide. If you are concerned about any of this, please talk with your doctor or nurse.

*The above information includes some, but not necessarily all, of the possible side effects of this medication. The side effects in this teaching sheet may not be the same ones you experience. Your side effects may be different, depending on how often you receive treatment (your schedule) and how much you receive each time (your dosage). Side effects may also vary if you take other medications. Please talk with your doctor or nurse if you have questions about possible side effects you may experience. This document should not take the place of conversations with members of your health care team.*
If you experience any significant change in your health during or after treatment, contact a member of your health care team right away.

Managing your oral chemotherapy schedule at home can be challenging. To help you with this, consider using tools to help you keep track of your schedule and any side effects you may have. You can find these tools online at www.dana-farber.org/OralChemoDiary.