



Chemotherapy: Irinotecan (Camptosar®)

Pronounced: "eye rye no TEE kan"

How drug is given: By vein (IV)

Purpose: To kill cancer cells in colon cancer, rectal cancer, and other cancers

Things that may occur during or within hours of treatment

- Mild to moderate nausea, vomiting, and loss of appetite may occur. You may be given medicine to help with this.
- Stomach cramping, diarrhea, runny nose, watery eyes and sweating may occur during or shortly after the infusion. Drugs to prevent or treat this can be given.

Things that may occur a few days to weeks later

- Loose stools or diarrhea may occur within a few days after the drug is given. You may take loperamide (Imodium A-D®) to help control diarrhea. You can buy this at most drug stores. Be sure also drink more fluids (water, juice, sports drinks). If these do not help within 24 hours, **call your cancer care team.**

Loperamide (Imodium A-D®) Instructions

- Take 4 mg (2 pills) the first time you have diarrhea.
 - Loperamide (Imodium A-D®) is available in liquid form over the counter.
 - Continue taking 2 mg (1 pill) every 4 hours or after each loose stool.
 - If, after taking Imodium, you have 4-6 additional loose stools, call your cancer care team.
 - Do not take more than 8 pills in 24 hours without speaking to your cancer care team.
- 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

This may happen 7 to 14 days after the drug is given and then blood counts should return to normal. **If you have a fever of 100.5°F (38°C) or higher, chills, a cough, or any bleeding problems, call your cancer care team right away.**

- Your liver may be affected by this drug. In such cases, your skin might turn yellow and a yellow coloring may be seen in the whites of your eyes. You may have pain in your right side. You may feel more tired. If you notice any of these symptoms, **tell your cancer care team right away**
- Some or all of your hair may fall out around 3 to 4 weeks after treatment starts. You may lose hair on your head as well as facial and body hair. You may want to buy a wig before hair loss begins. Hair may grow back during treatment.
- 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.
- If you develop a new or worsening cough or shortness of breath, report this to your cancer care team.

Things that may occur after treatment ends (even months to years later)

Sexual health and fertility

If you are concerned about any of this, please talk with your cancer care team.

- It is very important to use birth control if you are having sex, because this drug could harm an unborn baby.
- Men can become sterile and may want to think about sperm banking prior to chemotherapy
- For women, your period (menstrual cycle) may not be regular for a while or may stop completely and you may not be able to get pregnant.
- Women should not breast-feed while receiving this drug.

The information in this document includes some, but not necessarily all, of the possible side effects of this medication. The side effects listed here 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 are taking other medications. Please speak with your cancer care team if you have questions about possible side effects you may experience. This document should not take the place of conversations with members of your cancer care team.

If you experience any significant change in your health during or after treatment, contact a member of your cancer care team right away.