

# Tips for Managing Diarrhea While on Chemotherapy

## Things you can do on your own



### Keep track of your diarrhea:

- Write down how many bowel movements you have each day

### Stay hydrated and change your diet to lessen your symptoms:

- Drink at least 6-8 cups of clear liquids, such as water, daily while having diarrhea to prevent dehydration
- Avoid caffeine, alcohol, milk
- Avoid greasy, fatty, and fried foods
- Eat small, frequent meals throughout the day instead of 3 big meals
- Drink sports drinks or oral rehydration salt to replenish your electrolytes

### Keep the skin around your anus healthy:

- If your skin is getting irritated after bowel movements, gently wipe yourself with baby wipes and then apply barrier creams or diaper ointments

### Medication:

- Take loperamide 2mg after each loose stools, up to max of 16mg per day

## When to seek medical attention



- If you have a fever  $\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$
- If your diarrhea worsens despite following the above tips
- If you are having signs of dehydration. Signs of dehydration include:
  - Feeling weak, dizzy, or lightheaded
  - Having dark yellow or very little urine
  - Having a dry mouth/being thirsty
  - If you have  $\geq 7$  episodes of diarrhea a day
- If there is large amount of watery stoma output (for patients with stoma)
- If there is blood in your stool
- If your stools are black in color, as this can sometimes be a sign of internal bleeding
- If there is severe abdominal pain or persistent abdominal pain



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