

Patient Information

DIARRHEA

Oncology

Vitalité Zone: 1B 4 5 6

Facility: _____

What is diarrhea?

Diarrhea is frequent evacuation of soft or liquid stools, which can be accompanied by abdominal pain, cramps or bloating. Diarrhea can be mild (one to three bowel movements per day) or more severe (four bowel movements or more than usual). Diarrhea can be related to cancer or be a common side effect of cancer treatment.

What to do

➤ Medications

- Stop taking laxatives, if applicable (e.g. Senokot, Colace, RestoraLAX, Lactulose).
- Your doctor can prescribe a medication to control diarrhea, as needed.

➤ Food advice

- Drink 1.5 to 2 litres of fluids per day (e.g. water, diluted juice, broth/soup, Ensure, Pedialyte, Gatorade, Powerade, decaffeinated tea or coffee, rehydration drink).
- Avoid sugary drinks (e.g. juice, punch, etc.).
- Avoid alcohol.
- Avoid caffeine (e.g. coffee, Red Bull, Mountain Dew, Dr Pepper, Pepsi).
- Eat frequent light meals.
- Limit your fibre intake.
- Avoid fatty and deep-fried foods.
- Homemade rehydration drink recipe: 8 oz water, 8 oz orange juice and 1 pinch salt.

➤ Lifestyle habits

- After each bowel movement, thoroughly clean the anal region with lukewarm water; dry well. You can also take a lukewarm bath or a sitz bath for a few minutes.
- Avoid smoking.

Recommended foods	Foods to avoid
<p><u>Low Low-fat foods such as:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bananas - Rice - Applesauce - Dry toast - Potatoes - Crackers - Eggs, fish and meats 	<p><u>High-fibre foods such as:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Peas - Beans, nuts - Whole grain cereal and bread <p><u>High-fat foods such as:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deep-fried food and bacon - Chips - Cakes, pies and cookies
<p><u>Other foods:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - White bread - White pasta - Pretzels - Cereal (Rice Krispies or plain Cheerios) - Canned fruit - Oatmeal - Barley - Yogurt and lactose-free milk 	<p><u>Other foods:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raw fruit and vegetables, unpeeled or seeded - Corn, broccoli and cabbage - Dried fruit and fruit containing a stone or seeds (plums, grapes, berries) - Spicy foods - Milk - Sorbitol (type of sugar found in sugarless gum, can and low-sugar jams)

When to consult the Oncology Clinic?

If your symptoms persist for more than 24 hours despite having followed these tips, you can contact the Oncology Clinic in your area between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.

You should go to the Emergency Department if...

- You have four bowel movements or more than usual per day;
- You have pain in the anal region or very severe abdominal cramps;
- You are vomiting or are unable to eat or drink;
- You have blood and/or mucus in your stools;
- Your temperature is over 38°C or 100°F;
- You are feeling very weak or dizzy.