

## Patient information Leaflet for Capecitabine

It is a chemotherapy drug which is used for the treatment of breast, colon, rectum, stomach cancer. Capecitabine is taken orally as a tablet of 500 mg. It is given either alone, in combination with other chemotherapy drugs or even along with radiation as a radio sensitizer. It must be taken under the supervision of a doctor who is experienced in giving chemotherapy medications for cancer.

### Before Using It

Inform of any medical illness such as hepatitis (liver disease), kidney disorder, heart disease, diabetes, low blood counts and platelets, pregnancy, breast feeding and **drug allergy**. The above information will be useful to adjust the dose of your medicine.

*Please inform your doctor if you have any angina or cardiac/heart illness in the past.*

*Please use some kind of birth control while you are on chemotherapy.*

*Please avoid using any ayurvedic or homeopathic preparation while on chemotherapy.*

### While Taking it.

Capecitabine may interact with a number of drugs and supplements, which may either raise or lower the level of paclitaxel in your blood. Tell your doctor if you are taking any of the following:

#### **Multivitamin preparation ( Folic Acid)**

Anti-seizure drugs (Phenytoin/Phenobarbital/Carbamazepine)

Warfarin as capecitabine may increase its effect leading to bleeding.

Foods such as grape fruit or grape fruit juice.

### How is it administered?

Please follow the instructions carefully and identify your tablets before taking it. It is available as a 500 mg tablet usually taken 12 hours apart for 2 weeks, followed by a 1 week break before repeating the next dosage cycle. Swallow whole tablet with a glass of water, within 30 minutes after a meal (breakfast and dinner). Do not crush or chew. If you miss a dose, skip this and take your next dose as scheduled. If you have stopped Capecitabine due to any reasons and then restarted do not make up for the missed doses. Do not double the dose to make up for the forgotten dose. Store in the original package at room temperature, away from heat, light or moisture. If you have nausea and vomiting while on capecitabine you can take *tablet ondansetron (8mg) /tablet domperidone (10 mg) ½ an hour* before taking the drug.

## Possible side effects

You will probably not have most of the following side effects, but if you have any talk to your doctor or nurse. They can help you understand the side effects and cope with them. Each person's reaction to chemotherapy is different. Some people have very few side effects while others may experience more.

### COMMON SIDE EFFECTS: (> 10%)

- Pain, burning, redness of palms or feet, including tingling, numbness, peeling. (HAND FOOT SYNDROME)
- Diarrhea
- Soreness of mouth or ulcers
- Nausea and vomiting
- Pain or cramps in belly.
- Anemia
- Weakness or Tiredness

### Measures to take if you have hand foot syndrome

1. Avoid activities that cause rubbing, pressure or heat exposure to hands and feet. (I.e. gripping tools, vigorous washing, and hot baths). Wear loose comfortable footwear and clothes.
2. Clean hands and feet with lukewarm water and apply moisturizer liberally and often to your hands and feet, especially in the creases. You can apply emollients/petroleum jelly also.
3. If you experience ulcers, or blisters on hands or feet, or symptoms affecting your regular activities you must withhold Capecitabine and consult your doctor/oncologist.

### Measures to take if you diarrhea

1. Take of plenty of liquids and salt. You can take ORS dissolved in 1 liter of water as much as you can.
2. You can take tablet Lomotil 2mg/ tablet imodium stat if you have diarrhea and can repeat it as often as four times per day.

3. If your diarrhea is increasing/ increase in stoma output/ loose motions more than 4-6- times per day/pain in belly/fever or blood in stools then immediately stop your medicine and consult your nurse/doctor.

#### LESS COMMON SIDE EFFECTS: (1-10%)

- Low blood counts and infection
- Low platelet count/bleeding
- Altered taste/ Loss of appetite
- Hair loss
- Hyper pigmentation of skin

#### RARE SIDE EFFECTS: (< 1%)

- Allergic reaction
- Changes in heart rhythm or precipitation of any cardiac illness or angina or infarction.