Arroyo Grande Community Hospital
A Dignity Health Member

If you have any questions, **please consult your physician or call AGCH Coastal Cancer Care at 805.481.7245. For emergency, call 911.**

PATIENT EDUCATION

Irinotecan (Camptosar, CPT 11)

SIDE EFFECTS

It is important for the patient to follow all prescription instructions carefully. You may experience some, all, or none of the following:

- **Diarrhea –** There are 2 types of diarrhea associated with this drug. Once type starts during or within 24 hours of treatment. You may experience sweating and abdominal cramping with this type of diarrhea. The second type, which is known as late-onset diarrhea, occurs more than 24 hours after getting this drug and usually starts 11 days after first dose. This can be prolonged and severe, causing life-threatening dehydration of not properly treated. You MUST TAKE THE MEDICATION GIVEN FOR THIS EXACTLY ORDERED by your doctor.
- **Lowered Blood Counts –** This drug will cause a temporary decrease in your blood cell counts 2-3 weeks after treatment. This will make you more susceptible to infections and bleeding. Frequent blood tests will be done to monitor your blood counts.
- **Nausea/Vomiting –** This can start during your treatment and last for about 24-36 hours. It may be moderate to severe. Medication will be given to help alleviate or prevent nausea or vomiting.
- **Hair Loss –** You may experience either partial or almost complete hair loss while on this drug. Hair will usually grow back when treatment is completed.

PATIENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Notify your doctor or oncology nurse immediately if you experience:

- Persistent diarrhea
- Signs of Infection: Chills or fever above 100.5°F, new or significant cough of shortness of breath, pain or burning with urination, a sore that is red and swollen, or white patches in your mouth or tongue.
- Signs of Bleeding: Nosebleeds that will not stop with pressure; blood in urine or stool; bleeding of gums; unusual bruising; red or purple spots on your body; or a cut that takes longer than usual to stop bleeding.
- Persistent vomiting
- Extreme fatigue, weakness, or dizziness.
- Decrease in urine

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

- **Birth Control Measures –** are necessary during and for 4 months after treatment due to potential harm to sperm/egg health.
- **Before any dental procedure, be sure and tell you dentist you are taking this medication.**
- **Drink plenty of liquids. Avoid laxatives; beverages that have alcohol or caffeine; prune juice; high-fiber foods; and spicy, greasy, or fried foods.**