

Cetuximab and Irinotecan

Care Team Contact Information: _____

Pharmacy Contact Information: _____

Diagnosis: _____

- This treatment is often used for colon or rectal (colorectal) cancer (CRC).
- It may also be used for other reasons.

Goal of Treatment: _____

- Treatment may continue for a certain time period, until it no longer works, or until side effects are no longer controlled.

Treatment Regimen

Treatment Name	How the Treatment Works	How the Treatment is Given
Cetuximab (seh-TUK-sih-mab): Erbix (ER-bih-tux)	Slows down or stops cancer growth by blocking a specific protein that cancer cells need to survive.	Infusion into a vein (intravenous (IV) infusion).
Irinotecan (I-rih-noh-TEE-kan): Camptosar (KAMP-toh-sar)	Slows down or stops the growth of cancer cells by interfering with the process that cancer cells use to make new cells.	Infusion into a vein (intravenous (IV) infusion).

Treatment Administration and Schedule

Treatment is typically repeated every 2 weeks. This length of time is called a “cycle”.

- Cetuximab is given on Day 1
- Irinotecan is given on Day 1.

Treatment Name	Cycle 1							Next Cycle
	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	...	Day 14	Day 1
Cetuximab	✓							✓
Irinotecan	✓							✓

Appointments

Appointments may include regular check-ups with your care team, treatment appointments, lab visits, and imaging tests. It's important to keep your appointments whenever you can. If you miss any appointments, call your care provider as soon as possible to reschedule your appointment.

Supportive Care to Prevent and Treat Side Effects

Description	Supportive Care Given at the Clinic or Hospital	Supportive Care Taken at Home
To help lower the risk of infusion-related reactions	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
To help prevent or treat diarrhea	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
To help prevent or treat nausea and vomiting	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
To help prevent an acne-like rash	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Other	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Common Side Effects

Side Effect	Important Information
<p>Diarrhea (Boxed Warning)</p>	<p>Description: Diarrhea is when you have loose, watery bowel movements more often than usual. With irinotecan, diarrhea may be either “early” or “late”. Early diarrhea starts less than 24 hours after your dose of irinotecan. Late diarrhea starts more than 24 hours after your dose of irinotecan. Early and late diarrhea are treated differently because they happen for different reasons.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you have early diarrhea, your care team may give you a medicine called atropine. • Have loperamide (Imodium) ready at home. • If you have late diarrhea, your care team will tell you how often to take loperamide. • Keep track of how many times you go to the bathroom each day. • Drink 8 to 10 glasses of water or other fluids every day, unless your care team tells you otherwise. • Eat small meals of mild, low-fiber foods (such as bananas, applesauce, potatoes, chicken, rice, and toast). • If you have diarrhea, avoid eating high-fiber foods (such as raw vegetables, fruits, and whole grains), foods that cause gas (such as broccoli and beans), dairy foods (such as yogurt and milk), and spicy, fried, and greasy foods. <p>Talk to your care team if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diarrhea for the first time during treatment • Black or bloody stools • Symptoms of dehydration such as lightheadedness, dizziness, or faintness • Inability to take fluids by mouth due to nausea or vomiting • Inability to get diarrhea under control within 24 hours
<p>Low White Blood Cell (WBC) Count (Neutropenia) and Increased Risk of Infection (Boxed Warning)</p>	<p>Description: WBCs help protect your body from infections. A low WBC count increases your risk of infection.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash your hands often and bathe regularly. • Avoid crowded places and close contact with people who are sick. • Follow food safety and wound care advice from your care team. • Your care team may prescribe medicine to help your WBCs recover. <p>Talk to your care team if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher • Chills • New or worsening cough or sore throat • Painful urination or signs of a urinary infection • Feeling much more tired than usual • Red, swollen, warm, or painful areas on the skin (possible skin infection)

<p>Low Platelet Count (Thrombocytopenia) (Boxed Warning)</p>	<p>Description: Platelets help your blood clot and wounds heal. A low platelet count increases your risk of bruising and bleeding.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blow your nose gently and avoid picking it. • Brush your teeth gently with a soft toothbrush and keep good oral hygiene. • Use an electric razor for shaving and a nail file instead of nail clippers. • Avoid over-the-counter medicines that can increase bleeding risk (for example, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) like ibuprofen). • Talk with your care team or dentist before medical or dental procedures — you may need to pause treatment. <p>Talk to your care team if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A nosebleed lasting more than 5 minutes despite pressure • A cut that continues to bleed • Heavy gum bleeding when brushing or flossing • Sudden or severe headache • Blood in your urine or stool • Blood in your spit after coughing
<p>Low Red Blood Cell (RBC) Count and Hemoglobin (Hgb) (Anemia) (Boxed Warning)</p>	<p>Description: RBCs and Hgb carry oxygen to your body’s tissues and remove carbon dioxide. Low RBC or Hgb (anemia) can make you feel weak, very tired, or look pale.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aim for 7 to 8 hours of sleep each night. • Do not drive, operate heavy machinery, or do other dangerous activities if you are very tired. • Balance activity and rest — stay as active as you can, but rest when needed. • Eat a balanced diet and follow any nutrition or supplement advice from your care team. <p>Talk to your care team if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shortness of breath • Dizziness or fainting • Fast or irregular heartbeats • Sudden or severe headache

<p>Fatigue</p>	<p>Description: Fatigue is a constant and sometimes strong feeling of tiredness.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routine exercise can help reduce fatigue. Talk with your care team to find the right type and amount of activity for you. • Ask family and friends for help with daily tasks and for emotional support. • Try healthy ways to feel better, such as meditation, journaling, yoga, or guided imagery, to reduce anxiety and improve well-being. • Aim for 7 to 8 hours of sleep each night. Limit daytime naps to help you sleep better at night. • Do not drive, operate heavy machinery, or do other potentially dangerous activities if you are very tired. <p>Talk to your care team if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tiredness that affects your daily life or prevents you from doing normal activities • Tiredness that does not get better with rest • Dizziness or weakness along with severe tiredness
<p>Mouth Sores or Irritation (Mucositis or Stomatitis)</p>	<p>Description: Treatment can irritate the lining of the mouth. In some cases, this can cause redness, sores, pain, and swelling.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rinse your mouth after meals and at bedtime; rinse more often if sores develop. • Brush your teeth gently with a soft toothbrush or use a cotton swab after meals. • Use a mild, non-alcohol mouth rinse at least 4 times daily (after meals and at bedtime). Example: 1/8 teaspoon salt + 1/4 teaspoon baking soda in 8 oz warm water. • Avoid acidic, hot, spicy, rough, or crunchy foods and drinks that can irritate your mouth. • Avoid tobacco, alcohol, and alcohol-based mouthwash. • Your care team may prescribe medicines or mouth treatments to help with pain and healing. <p>Talk to your care team if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Painful mouth sores or throat pain • Trouble eating or significant weight loss
<p>Stomach-Area (Abdominal) Pain</p>	<p>Description: Abdominal pain is when you feel discomfort or pain in the belly area.</p> <p>Talk to your care team if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe abdominal pain

<p>Nausea and Vomiting</p>	<p>Description: Nausea is an uncomfortable feeling in your stomach or the need to throw up. You may or may not vomit.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eat smaller, more frequent meals. • Avoid fatty, fried, spicy, or highly sweet foods. • Eat bland foods at room temperature and drink clear liquids. • If you vomit, start with small sips of water, broth, or other clear liquids. If these stay down, try soft foods (such as gelatin, plain cornstarch pudding, yogurt, strained soup, or strained cooked cereal) and gradually return to solid foods. • Your care team may prescribe medicine for these symptoms. <p>Talk to your care team if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vomiting for more than 24 hours • Nonstop vomiting • Signs of dehydration (very thirsty, dry mouth, dizziness, or dark urine) • Blood or coffee-ground-like appearance in your vomit • Severe stomach pain that does not go away after vomiting
<p>Low Appetite</p>	<p>Description: Loss of appetite can lead to weight loss and low energy. Small changes in when and what you eat can help maintain strength and nutrition.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be as active as you can. Do light physical activity before a meal (check with your care team before starting an exercise program). • Note times of day when your appetite is best and eat your largest meal then. • Eat 5 or 6 small meals or snacks each day. • Choose high-protein foods (beans, chicken, fish, meat, yogurt, tofu, eggs). Eat protein first during meals. • Choose higher-calorie foods (avoid “low-fat”, “fat-free”, or “diet” options when trying to gain/maintain weight). • If you feel full quickly, avoid drinking 30 minutes before a meal and drink liquids between meals; choose calorie-containing drinks rather than diet drinks. • Have a bedtime snack that’s easy to digest (for example, peanut butter and crackers). If you have reflux, wait at least 1 hour before lying down. • Try nutritious beverages (high-protein shakes or smoothies) if solid food is unappealing. • Ask your care team about liquid nutrition supplements and ways to add protein or calories (protein powder, yogurt, ice cream). <p>Talk to your care team if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unintentional weight loss • Little or no appetite for several days • Excessive tiredness or low energy

<p>Liver Problems</p>	<p>Description: Treatment can cause liver injury. Your care team may check your liver with blood tests before and during treatment.</p> <p>Talk to your care team if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yellowing of your skin or the white part of your eyes (jaundice) • Severe nausea or vomiting • Pain on the right side of your stomach area (abdomen) • Dark, tea-colored urine • Bleeding or bruising more easily than normal
<p>Hair Loss (Alopecia)</p>	<p>Description: Hair loss or thinning may begin days to weeks after treatment starts and usually grows back later. New growth can be a different color or texture and may not look the same as before.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider a short haircut before treatment and use scarves, hats, or wigs for comfort and confidence. • Keep your head covered outdoors to protect it from the sun and cold; use sunscreen on your uncovered scalp. • Use gentle haircare: mild shampoo, soft brush, and avoid heat styling and harsh treatments. • Ask your care team about wig prescriptions or resources for head coverings. <p>Talk to your care team if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No hair regrowth months after treatment ends • Concern about hair changes or need help finding a wig or support resources
<p>Nail Changes</p>	<p>Description: Treatment can change how your fingernails and toenails look and feel. Nails may become discolored, ridged, brittle, thick, sore, or may lift or loosen from the nail bed. The skin around the nails can also become red, swollen, or painful.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep nails short and clean; trim carefully and file rough edges. • Wear comfortable shoes with room for your toes and soft socks. • Protect your hands and feet with gloves and closed-toe shoes when doing chores. • Avoid fake nails, gel/acrylic nails, and harsh chemicals (like strong nail polish removers). • Moisturize your hands, feet, and cuticles with fragrance-free cream. • Do not bite your nails or pick at the skin around them. <p>Talk to your care team if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redness, swelling, warmth, or pain around a nail • Pus, drainage, or a bad smell from the nail area (signs of infection) • Nails that are very loose, lifting, or falling off • Nail changes that make it hard to walk or use your hands • Fever or chills along with nail or skin changes

<p>Acne-like Rash</p>	<p>Description: An acne-like rash is a skin condition. It usually appears on the face, neck, and back, causing red, inflamed bumps that may itch or feel dry.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you get a rash, keep the area clean and dry. • Check with your care team before using any treatments. • Do not use over-the-counter acne treatments like benzoyl peroxide or salicylic acid, or soaps with alcohol. • Wash with a mild, moisturizing soap, and avoid long, hot baths or showers. • After washing, pat your skin dry instead of rubbing. • Oatmeal baths and unscented moisturizers may relieve itching. • Sunlight can worsen symptoms, so avoid sun exposure whenever possible. • Wear long-sleeved clothing with ultraviolet (UV) protection if possible. • Use broad-brimmed hats for added protection. • Apply broad-spectrum sunscreen (UVA/UVB), with sun protective factor (SPF) 30 or higher, as directed. • Use lip balm with SPF 30 or higher. • Avoid tanning beds. • Your care team may recommend or prescribe medicine for rash. <p>Talk to your care team if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Painful or worsening rash • Rash that does not improve with treatment
<p>Low Magnesium Levels in Your Blood (Hypomagnesemia)</p>	<p>Description: Treatment may cause low levels of magnesium in your blood. Your care team will do blood tests to check you for these changes and will treat you if needed.</p> <p>Talk to your care team if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extreme fatigue • Irregular heartbeat or chest pain • Muscle spasm, twitches, tremors, or cramps • Numbness or tingling in your fingers or toes • Nausea, vomiting, or loss of appetite • Seizures

Select Rare Side Effects

Side Effect	Talk to Your Care Team if You Have Any of These Signs or Symptoms
Infusion-Related Reactions (Boxed Warning)	<p>You may have a higher risk of a serious infusion reaction if you have had a tick bite or a red meat allergy.</p> <p>People with galactose-α-1,3-galactose (alpha-gal) IgE antibodies may have an increased risk of anaphylactic reactions. Your care team may consider testing for alpha-gal IgE antibodies before you start treatment. However, severe infusion reactions may still happen with a negative result.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chills or shaking • Itching, rash, or flushing • Trouble breathing, wheezing, or tongue swelling • Dizziness or feeling faint • Feeling of impending doom • Fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher • New or severe pain in your back or neck
Heart and Lung Problems (Boxed Warning)	<p>There is a risk of heart and lung problems, including cardiopulmonary arrest or sudden death. Tell your care team if you have a history of coronary artery disease, congestive heart failure, or irregular heartbeats (arrhythmias).</p>
Lung Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cough • Shortness of breath • Chest pain or chest tightness
Kidney Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease in your amount of urine • Blood in your urine • Swelling of your ankles • Loss of appetite
Dizziness or Changes in Vision	<p>These symptoms may happen within 24 hours after your dose of irinotecan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dizziness • Lightheadedness • Spinning sensation (vertigo)
Extravasation	<p>Extravasation happens when medicine that is supposed to go into a vein leaks out into the tissues around it. This can cause pain, swelling, and damage to the skin and tissues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pain, burning, or stinging at the infusion site • Swelling, redness, or blistering around the site • Coolness or numbness in the area • Decreased blood flow or tissue damage, potentially leading to ulcers or tissue death in severe cases
Allergic Reactions	<p>Get emergency medical help right away if you develop any of the following signs or symptoms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swelling of your lips, mouth, tongue, or throat • Trouble breathing or swallowing • Raised red areas on your skin (hives) • A very fast heartbeat • You feel dizzy or faint

**Before starting treatment, ask your care team when to call 9-1-1 or seek emergency help.
If you experience any new, worsening, or uncontrolled side effects, contact your care team immediately.**

Intimacy, Fertility, Pregnancy, and Breastfeeding

- Treatment may **change how you feel about intimacy and your body**. However, physical closeness—such as holding hands and hugging—remains safe. It is common to have questions about intimacy. If needed, talk to your care team for guidance.
- Treatment can affect your **ability to have children**. It may damage your reproductive organs or stop them from working. If you are worried about fertility, talk to your care team before starting treatment.
- Treatment may **harm an unborn baby**.
 - If you are able to become pregnant:
 - Take a pregnancy test before starting treatment.
 - Use an effective method of birth control during treatment, for 2 months after your last dose of cetuximab, and for 6 months after your last dose of irinotecan.
 - If you think you might be pregnant or if you become pregnant, tell your care team right away.
 - If your partner is able to become pregnant, use an effective method of birth control—such as condoms—during treatment with cetuximab and irinotecan and for 3 months after your last dose of irinotecan.
- **Do NOT breastfeed** during treatment, for 7 days after your last dose of irinotecan, and for 2 months after your last dose of cetuximab.

Handling Body Fluids and Waste

Some drugs you receive may stay in your urine, stool, sweat, or vomit for many days after treatment. Because many cancer drugs are toxic, your body waste may also be dangerous to touch. To help protect yourself, your loved ones, and the environment, **follow these instructions** for at least **48 hours** after each dose of **irinotecan**: (Note: Cetuximab does not require special handling of body fluids and waste.)

- People who are pregnant should avoid touching anything that may be soiled with body fluids from the patient.
- You can use your usual toilet. Always close the lid and flush to discard all waste. If you have a low-flow toilet, flush twice.
- If the toilet or seat is soiled with urine, stool, or vomit, clean the surface after each use before others use it.
- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after using the toilet.
- If you need a bedpan, inform your caregiver so they can wear gloves and assist with cleanup. Wash the bedpan with soap and water daily.
- If you cannot control your bladder or bowels, use a disposable pad with a plastic back, a diaper, or a sheet to absorb waste.
- Wash any skin exposed to body waste with soap and water.
- Wash soiled linens or clothing separately from other laundry. If you don't have a washer, place them in a plastic bag until they can be washed.
- Wash your hands with soap and water after touching soiled linens or clothing.

Scan the QR code below to access this education sheet.



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PES-400