

PHARMACY

Drug Information

CAPOX Regimen (Capecitabine, Oxaliplatin)



What is CAPOX Regimen?

- CAPOX regimen is usually given for the treatment of colon, esophageal, pancreatic or stomach cancer. It consists of an Oxaliplatin injection and an oral chemotherapy drug Capecitabine.

How is CAPOX Regimen Administered?

- CAPOX is given every three weekly. Oxaliplatin is given by injection into a vein (an intravenous infusion) on the first day of the cycle, and Capecitabine is started on the evening of your Oxaliplatin infusion.
- Capecitabine should be taken orally twice daily, in the morning after breakfast and then after your evening meal for 14 days, followed by a one week break. The doses should be spaced 10–12 hours apart. Try not to touch the medicine with your bare hands, use the medicine cup provided to take your medicine.
- Swallow Capecitabine whole with a glass of water within half an hour after a meal. Do not chew or crush the medicines.
- Inform your doctor or pharmacist if you have difficulty swallowing. They may suggest that you dissolve the Capecitabine tablets in water. In this case, dissolve a tablet in roughly 30 to 50ml glass of warm water, stir with a spoon until the tablets are completely dissolved and then drink it immediately. It may take 15-20 minutes for it to dissolve completely. The glass and spoon should be washed and kept separate from your other crockery and cooking utensils.
- If you vomit after taking Capecitabine, do not take a second dose. Inform your doctor immediately for advice. If you miss a dose of Capecitabine, take it as soon as you can if it is within 6 hours of the missed dose. If it is over 6 hours since the missed dose, skip the missed dose and go back to the usual dosing time, do not take a double dose.

Can CAPOX Regimen be Administered With Other Medications?

- Please inform your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking other medications, including Traditional Chinese Medicines, Jamu medicines or supplements.

What are the Important Side Effects of the CAPOX Regimen?

Inform the nurses immediately during infusion of Oxaliplatin if you experience the following:

Allergic reaction

- Oxaliplatin may rarely cause an allergic reaction while it's being given. Signs of a reaction can include a rash, flushing or shortness of breath, swelling of your face or lips, feeling dizzy, having abdominal, back or chest pain or feeling unwell.

Laryngeal spasm

- Oxaliplatin may rarely affect the area around the voice box (larynx), resulting in difficulties with swallowing and breathing. This might happen during the treatment or in the first few days after treatment. This symptom may be worse in cold environment so it is advisable to keep yourself warm by wearing a jacket or take hot beverages for at least few days after treatment.

Pain along the vein

- Oxaliplatin may cause pain at the site where the injection is given or along the vein. If you feel pain, tell your nurse straight away so that the infusion site can be checked. They may give the drug more slowly or flush it through with more fluids to reduce pain.
- Medications prescribed by your doctor should be beneficial for your condition even though they may result in some inevitable side effects.

Side Effect	Management
Risk of infection can occur as CAPOX regimen can reduce the number of white blood cells in your blood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To reduce risk of infection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wash your hands after toileting. - Avoid crowds and people who are sick. - Avoid raw food. • Please proceed to the A&E department immediately if you experience signs of infection such as fever with a temperature of 38°C and above, chills and shivering. Avoid taking Paracetamol (Panadol®) to relieve fever. Be aware that taking Paracetamol may mask fever and hence delay treatment of infection.

Side Effect	Management
Bruising or bleeding can occur as CAPOX can reduce the number of platelets in your blood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To reduce risk of bleeding problems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do not pick your nose. - Brush your teeth gently with a soft toothbrush. - Be aware that bleeding may take a longer time to stop. • Please proceed to the A&E department immediately if you experience any severe bleeding (eg, passing a large amount of fresh blood in urine or stools, or passing black sticky stools) or significant bruising.
Nausea or vomiting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take small, frequent meals. • Avoid smells that precipitate nausea. • Take medicines for nausea or vomiting prescribed by your doctor. • Avoid tight-fitting clothes around the waist.
Diarrhoea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform your doctor if this is severe and/or does not improve with medicine use. • Drink at least two litres (8 cups) of fluids every day when you are having diarrhoea. • Avoid milk or dairy products and/or high fibre food whilst you are having diarrhoea.

Side Effect	Management
Mouth ulcers can occur on the tongue, the sides of the mouth or in the throat and this can lead to an infection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brush your teeth gently after eating and at bedtime with a soft toothbrush. • Rinse and brush your dentures after eating and soak them in denture solution overnight. • Rinsing your mouth regularly with an alcohol-free mouth gargle or salt water may help reduce chances of infection.
Hair Loss	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wear a wig or hat or use a gentle shampoo.
Hand-foot syndrome may occur during treatment. The palms of hands and soles of your feet may tingle, become red, darken, numb, painful, swollen or creases may be observed. Skin may also become dry or itchy. Nail beds may also darken.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform your doctor if blisters, severe pain or ulcers affects your normal daily activities. • Avoid tight-fitting shoes or rubbing pressure to hands and feet if this occurs. • Applying moisturizer to hands and feet liberally often may help. • Applying sunscreen with an SPF (sun protection factor) of at least 30 may help.
Numbness and tingling sensation in the hands or feet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform your doctor if you have this symptom or trouble buttoning up shirts or if you are unable to pick up objects
Lethargy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not drive or operate machinery if you are feeling tired.
Heart problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please proceed to the A & E department immediately if you experience signs of heart problems such

Side Effect	Management
	as shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, chest pain, fast heart beat or sudden swelling of legs.

If you develop rashes, facial swelling or shortness of breath after taking the medication, you could be allergic to the medication. Please seek medical attention immediately.

Are There any Special Precautions That I Need to Take?

- It is important to inform your doctor if you intend to conceive or breastfeed while taking this medication.
- You must not become pregnant during treatment and must use an effective method of contraception. You should take appropriate contraceptive measures during and up to 6 months after cessation of treatment. If pregnancy occurs during your treatment, you must inform your doctor immediately.
- CAPOX regimen may have an anti-fertility effect, which could be irreversible. You should discuss with your doctor regarding fertility preservation prior to starting treatment.
- You should not breast-feed during treatment.

What Else can I do to Help My Condition?

- Exercise
Light exercise is recommended as it helps to improve mobility, balance and even emotional well-being. Avoid strenuous exercise, and rest when you are feeling tired.
- Stay positive
Understand your condition and take an active role in managing it. Do not be afraid to talk about it with your doctor/ pharmacist/ family members. Repressed feelings can be harmful to your immediate well-being and long-term health.
- Adequate hydration
Maintain adequate hydration with two to three litres (8 to 12 cups) of fluids per day unless informed by your doctor to restrict fluids. This will decrease your chances of getting constipation and also prevent dehydration.

- Medical and dental treatment

If you need to go into hospital for any reason other than cancer, always inform the doctors and nurses that you are having chemotherapy. Talk to your cancer doctor if you think you need dental treatment. Always inform your dentist that you are having chemotherapy.

How do I Store Capecitabine?

- Store your medication in a cool, dry place away from heat, moisture and direct sunlight.

If you have any problem with your treatment, please contact your doctor, pharmacist or nurse clinician.

Please keep all medications out of reach of children.

You can also find useful information with regards to your medication on this website: <https://www.macmillan.org.uk/information-and-support>



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