

TXCH CPG#:	GH - XXX
TITLE:	Constipation Management
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DISTRIBUTION:	Texas Children's Cancer & Hematology Centers (TXCH) Global HOPE Faculty & Staff

1. Scope:

Constipation can be a serious complication of medical therapy, pain management, and inactivity due to chronic illness in patients with cancer.

2. Background:

Appropriate management and prevention of constipation can significantly reduce potentially severe morbidity. Both medical and non-medical interventions can be implemented to prevent and treat constipation.

3. Definitions:

N/A

4. Guidelines:

- **General Principles:**

1. Most commonly caused by vincristine, inactivity & opioid medications
2. It is preferred to prevent constipation rather than treating it after it has already started
3. ***No rectal exam, rectal temperature, enemas, or suppositories for patients on chemotherapy unless first discussed with a paediatric haematologist-oncologist***
 - Even minor trauma to the rectal mucosa can introduce a life-threatening infection in patients with neutropenia

- **Management:**

1. A bowel regimen is recommended for all patients on vincristine therapy and/or opioid therapy. Ensure the patient is hydrated & consider giving one (or more if indicated) of the following:
 - Bisacodyl (Dulcolax)
 - 3 - 12 years: 5 mg PO once daily to BID (max: 10mg)
 - > 12 years: 10 mg PO once daily to TID (max: 30mg)
 - Docusate sodium (Colace, a stool softener)
 - < 3 years: 30 mg by mouth divided once daily to 4 times daily
 - 3 – 6 years: 60 mg by mouth divided once daily to 4 times daily

This practice guideline is intended for use by professional health care providers. This guideline does not constitute advice concerning an individual's medical care and treatment.

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- > 6 years: 150 mg by mouth divided once daily to 4 times daily
 - Lactulose
 - 1-3 mL/kg/day divided by mouth twice daily (max 60 mL/day)
 - Liquid Paraffin (mineral oil)
 - <12 years: 5-15 mL/day divided once to twice daily
 - >12 years: 15-45 mL/day divided once to twice daily
 - Polyethylene glycol 3350 (Miralax/Movicol)
 - 1-1.5 g/kg/day (max 17 g/day) in 4-8 oz. of liquid by mouth daily.
 - *Avoid mixing in milk, orange juice or formula.*
 - Senna (stimulant laxative)
 - 2-6 years: 4.3 mg dose PO once to twice daily
 - 6-12 years: 8.6 mg dose PO once to twice daily
 - Age >12 years: 17.2 mg dose PO once to twice daily
 - Since this is a stimulant, it must be used in combination with a stool softener and should not be used on a regular basis
2. Adjuvant interventions include:
- Prune juice
 - 120-240 mL PO daily to twice daily; to reduce sweetness, mix with a little lemon juice

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Approval		
	Name	Signature
Medical Director – Botswana		
Medical Director – Malawi		
Medical Director – Uganda		
Director of Clinical Oncology		
Director of Clinical Hematology		

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