



PIL-0054

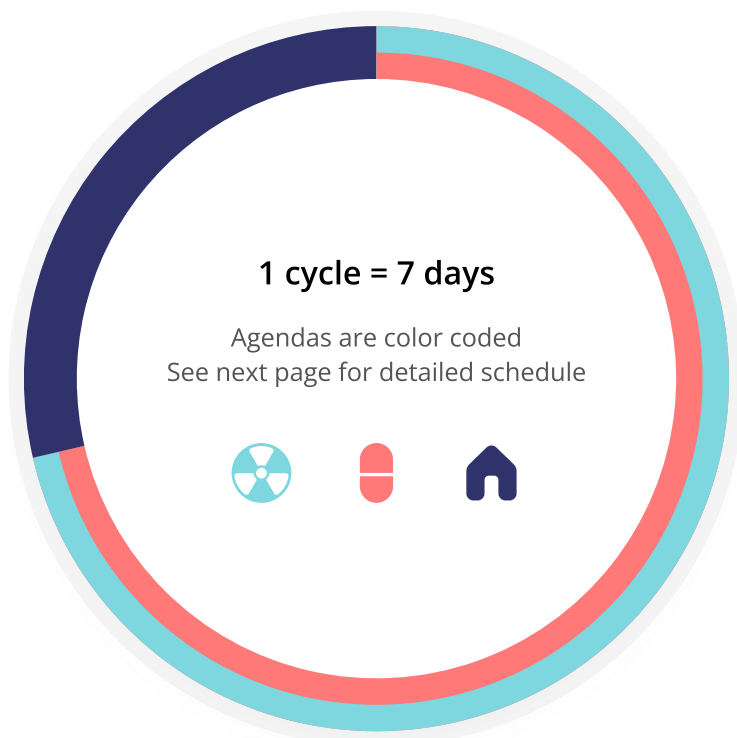
Capecitabine and Radiation Therapy

About the treatment

Concurrently given with radiation, capecitabine (antimetabolite chemotherapy) is a treatment option for colorectal and some other cancers. Radiation and cancer medicines are usually used to slow or stop cancer cell growth and spread more effectively.

Treatment details

- **Radiation** will be administered over ~ 15 to 30 minutes **on days 1 to 5 of your 7-day cycle**.
- **Capecitabine** is to be taken twice a day by mouth **from days 1 to 5 of your 7-day cycle**.
- **On days 6 and 7**, you won't be having any anti-cancer treatment. Take this time to rest and recover.





Radiation

Administered, over ~ 15 - 30 minutes, at the cancer centre



Capecitabine

By mouth, twice daily, at home



Rest

No treatment

Day 1



Day 2



Day 3



Day 4



Day 5



Day 6



Day 7



Side Effects

Chemotherapy is often linked to so many side effects. While it is true that chemotherapy drugs often cause a wide range of side effects, most of these side effects are temporary and can be minimised or prevented. Remember that different drugs cause different side effects, and each person experiences different side effects to varying degrees.

Common Side Effects

**The following side effects occur in more than 10 out of every 100 people.
You might have one or more of them.**

Fatigue

You may feel tired and find it harder to do daily chores/activities that you usually do or want to do. It may be physical, emotional and mental exhaustion.

Diarrhoea

This treatment may disturb the intestinal lining and cause loose, watery, and more frequent stools than usual. Certain medications have a higher chance of causing diarrhoea.

Nausea and/or vomiting

Every patient reacts differently to cancer medication. Many people feel nauseous, and some also experience vomiting. Nausea and vomiting can be managed or reduced with medication.

Hand and foot syndrome

Also called palmar-plantar erythrodysesthesia) is a side effect of some chemotherapy drugs that can cause redness, swelling and blistering on the palms of the hands and soles of the feet.

Low platelet count (thrombocytopenia)

Platelets help your blood clot, so you are at a higher risk of bleeding when your platelet count decreases. Let your oncology care team know if you have any excess bruising or bleeding, including nose bleeds, sore gums or blood in your urine or stool.

Low white blood cell count (Leukopenia or Neutropenia)

White blood cells (WBC) are crucial for fighting infection. While receiving treatment, your WBC count can drop, putting you at a higher risk of disease.

Other Common Side Effects

- Low appetite
- Abdominal pain
- Mouth sores

Patient Information Use and Disclaimer: this is not a complete list of side effects. Always consult your healthcare provider to ensure the information displayed on this page applies to your personal circumstances.

Occasional Side Effects

**The following side effects occur in between 1 to 10 out of every 100 people (1 - 10%)
You might have one or more of them.**

- Low red blood cell count (Anaemia)
- Swelling
- Constipation
- Upset stomach
- Taste disorder
- Liver changes (Monitored by specific blood tests)
- Watery eyes, redness, blurred vision
- Blood clots
- Feeling balance problem/spinning
- Dizziness
- Sleeplessness (Insomnia)
- Memory & cognitive problems
- Headache
- Mood changes
- Nail changes
- Rash, itchy skin, discolouration
- Rash or irritation on skin area treated with radiation
- Hair loss
- Muscle weakness and pain
- Joint pain
- Dehydration
- Lungs/Breathing problems (Cough, shortness of breath, fever)

Rare Side Effects

The following side effects occur in fewer than 1 out of every 100 people.

- Cardiac problems (Chest pain or tightness, irregular heartbeat or blood pressure changes, shortness of breath)
- Severe rash, blisters, peeling usually with fever
- Sensitivity to the sun or UV light
- Allergic reactions

Safe Handling of Oral Chemotherapy Medicine



You have been prescribed oral chemotherapy medicine for your medical condition. It is essential to handle this medicine with care, as incorrect handling may cause harm to unintended users.

Accidental exposure may occur through:

- Inhalation of dust when crushing or breaking the tablets/capsules
- Inhalation of droplets when there is spillage of liquid syrups
- Ingestion after contact with contaminated hands or the environment

General Precautions



- Tablets/capsules should be swallowed whole (not chewed).
- Do not crush or break tablets or capsules. Check with your pharmacist or doctor if you can or have difficulty swallowing them.
- If it is necessary to cut the tablets (e.g. into halves or quarters) to obtain the correct dose, a tablet cutter should be used. Do not use the same tablet cutter to cut other medicines.
- Wash your hands before and after taking medications.
- Caregivers should not handle medications with bare hands. Gloves should be worn. If there is accidental contact, hands should be washed immediately with soap and water.
- Pregnant and lactating females should avoid handling medications.
- Keep all medications in a safe place, out of reach of children.
- If the medication requires refrigeration, it should be properly separated from other foods (i.e. in a resealable plastic bag or container). Do not store other foods or medicines in the same container.
- Use designated oral syringes or spoons to take your medications. You may wash and reuse these for further doses, but do not use them for other purposes.
- If the doctor decides to stop treatment, return the remaining medicine to the pharmacy for proper disposal.

Food & Drink



Tell your healthcare team about any medicines you are taking. This includes vitamins, herbal supplements, traditional Chinese medicine and over-the-counter remedies. During treatment, please do not drink the juice of the following fruits, including supplements that may contain them: grapefruit, starfruit, pomegranate and pomelo. They may interfere with the effects of drugs or cause dangerous side effects.

As some treatments may weaken your immune system, avoiding raw or undercooked food such as sushi, raw meat, and runny eggs is advisable to prevent infection. Bacteria are often present in uncooked food and are usually killed by the cooking process. If your doctor determines it is safe to eat raw vegetables and fruits, they should be carefully washed. We have dietitian services that can help you plan your diet and meals. Please let a member of your healthcare team know if you are interested.

Pregnancy, Contraception and Breastfeeding



This drug may harm a baby developing in the womb. It is critical not to become pregnant while having treatment and for at least six months afterwards. Before starting treatment, talk to your healthcare team about effective contraception (for both male and female partners). Do not breastfeed during this treatment because the drug may pass through your breast milk.

Fertility



It is not known whether this treatment affects fertility in people. We have fertility services that can assist with family planning. Talk to your healthcare team before starting treatment if you intend to have a baby in the future.

Immunisations



You may have immunisations and vaccinations to protect your health. Please check with your healthcare team on which immunisations and vaccinations you can take, as this may vary depending on the type of cancer and treatment you are having.

Alcohol



It is generally advisable to avoid alcohol while undergoing cancer treatment.

Exercise



Keep an active routine. Regular exercise, such as walking 30 minutes weekly, would be helpful.

How to contact your Healthcare Team

Cancer Line (+65) 9722 0569



8:30 am - 5:30 pm (Mondays - Fridays)
Closed on Weekends & Public Holidays

For non-operating hours, weekends, and public holidays, please go to your nearest **Emergency Department**.

Contact your healthcare team as soon as possible if:



- You have severe side effects.
- Your side effects aren't getting any better.
- Your side effects are getting worse.

Seek medical attention if you develop the following:



- Soon after treatment, signs of an allergic reaction include rashes, face swelling, dizziness, chest tightness, a fast heartbeat, or breathing difficulties.
- Symptoms of an infection include fever (temperature over 38°C), chills, severe sore throat, wet cough (coughing up thick or green phlegm), and cloudy or foul-smelling urine.
- Signs of unusual bleeding, bruising, or dark and sticky stools.
- Feeling unwell (despite not having a fever).

Chemotherapy resources:

