

Critical Care Directorate
GUIDELINES FOR TREATMENT OF CONSTIPATION

AIM: The comfortable passage of soft-formed stool at intervals of no more than three days.

ON ADMISSION 1: Establish prior bowel history and any regular prescription.

2: If post surgery, determine if a pre-surgery bowel preparation had been prescribed.

FACTORS TO CONSIDER:

Feeding: If on TPN constipation unlikely unless constipated pre-admission.

If enterally fed aim for normal bowel habit. This may not be appropriate if on an elemental feed.

Medical condition : In neurological conditions predisposing atonic gut consider prophylactic laxatives:

Senna 10ml (2 tablets) Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday.

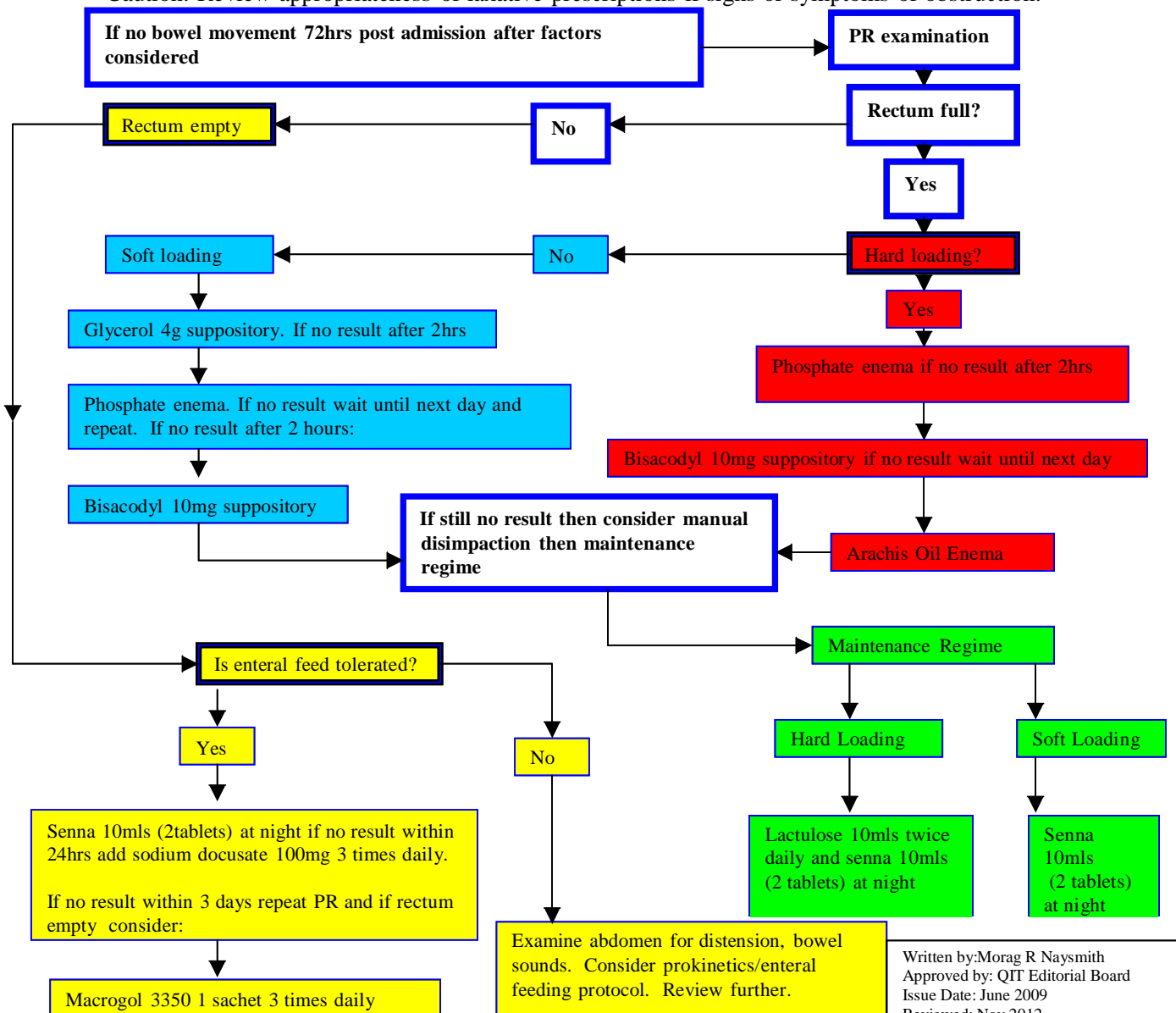
Glycerol 4g suppository Monday, Wednesday, Friday morning.

Lactulose 10mls twice daily.

If post-abdominal surgery/trauma then discuss bowel management with the surgeons.

Review constipating drugs.

Caution: Review appropriateness of laxative prescriptions if signs or symptoms of obstruction.



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