FOLFOX Chemotherapy Regimen Summary

FOLFOX is a commonly used chemotherapy regimen for treating **colorectal cancer**, especially **stage III colon cancer** and **metastatic colorectal cancer**. It combines **three drugs**:

Components of FOLFOX

Drug	Type	Function
FOL – Leucovorin (folinic acid)	Chemotherapy enhancer	Enhances the effectiveness of 5-FU
F – 5-Fluorouracil (5-FU)	Antimetabolite	Interferes with DNA and RNA synthesis, inhibiting cancer cell growth
OX – Oxaliplatin	Platinum-based drug	Causes DNA crosslinking, leading to cell death

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Common FOLFOX Variants

- **FOLFOX4**

- **FOLFOX6 (modified or mFOLFOX6)** – most widely used

- **FOLFOX7** – higher dose, less common

Typical FOLFOX Schedule (mFOLFOX6 example)

Cycle Duration: Every **2 weeks** (14-day cycle), repeated for **12 cycles** (6 months)

Day 1:

- Oxaliplatin IV over 2 hours

- Leucovorin IV over 2 hours (can be given with oxaliplatin)

- 5-FU IV bolus (quick injection)

- 5-FU continuous IV infusion over 46 hours via portable pump

Day 2:

- Continue 5-FU infusion

- Pump disconnected after 46 hours

Common Side Effects

Type	Examples
Gastrointestinal	Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, mucositis
Hematologic	Neutropenia, anemia, thrombocytopenia
Neurologic	**Peripheral neuropathy** (cold sensitivity, tingling, numbness from oxaliplatin)
Other	Fatigue, hand-foot syndrome (from 5-FU), taste changes

Monitoring and Supportive Care

- CBC (complete blood count) and chemistry panels before each cycle

- Neuropathy assessments

- Antiemetics (to prevent nausea)

- Dose adjustments for toxicity

Uses

- **Adjuvant treatment** for stage III colon cancer (after surgery)

- **First-line treatment** for metastatic colorectal cancer

- Sometimes used in combination with **targeted therapies** like bevacizumab or cetuximab in metastatic cases

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Let me know if you'd like a patient-friendly version or help comparing FOLFOX to another regimen like CAPOX or FOLFIRI.