



BC Cancer Agency OUTPATIENT BOWEL PROTOCOL SUMMARY

Where to start:

- Begin at STEP 1 unless you are switching from a different laxative treatment.
- If you are switching from a different laxative treatment, check with your doctor, nurse or pharmacist for the most appropriate starting level.

How to adjust:

- If you do not have a bowel movement after 2 days on STEP 1, go to the next step.
- Thereafter, if you do not have a bowel movement after 1 day at a step, go to the next step.
- If you are able to have a bowel movement which is soft and comfortable to pass at least every 2 to 3 days at a step, stay at the same step.

Cautions:

- If you have diarrhea, stop taking laxatives until you have a normal bowel movement and then restart at lower step.
- If you have severe cramps, stop taking sennosides and call your doctor or nurse.
- If 3 or more days pass without a bowel movement, please contact your doctor or nurse.
- Do not use suppositories if you have low white blood cells (which fight infection) or low platelets (which help the blood to clot). Check with your oncologist if you are not sure about this.

Step	Breakfast	Lunch	Bedtime
1			2 x Sennosides
2	2 x Sennosides		2 x Sennosides
3	2 x Sennosides	2 x Sennosides	2 x Sennosides
4	3 x Sennosides	3 x Sennosides	3 x Sennosides
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue Step 4. ▪ Unwrap and insert an adult bisacodyl suppository into your rectum. (Do not use suppositories if you have low white blood cells (which fight infection) or low platelets (which help the blood to clot). Check with your oncologist if you are not sure about this.) ▪ Keep suppository in place for at least 15 minutes. ▪ If still no bowel movement after 1 hour, call your doctor or nurse or pharmacist. ▪ Lactulose 15 to 30 ml twice a day may be added 		

What to buy at the drugstore:

- Sennosides 8.6 mg tablets also known as "SENOKOT®" or other generic brand
- Bisacodyl 10 mg suppositories also known as "DULCOLAX®" or other generic brand
- Lactulose syrup

Notes:

- Docusate may be a useful stool softener to take in addition to sennosides if you have hard stools and cramps with the sennosides alone. Docusate sodium is also known as "COLACE®" or other generic brand. You can take 2 capsules with each meal, up to 6 per day.
- A glycerin adult suppository will help lubricate the stool if it is hard and uncomfortable to pass.