Managing side effects of SIMEPREVIR, PEG-INTERFERON and RIBAVIRIN

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If you are having a serious side effect (such as chest pain), please seek immediate medical attention.

Cough (ribavirin)

- Increase intake of water or non-caffeinated beverages
- Use a humidifier
- Try sugar-free hard candy or cough drops

Depression, Anxiety and Irritability (peg-interferon)

- Talk to your provider about your symptoms and medications that might help
- Always discuss thoughts of harming yourself or someone else with your provider
- **Go to the nearest emergency room if you are in danger of harming yourself or others**
- Try mild to moderate exercises at least 3 times/week as directed by your provider
- Try relaxation techniques such as deep breathing, taped exercises, yoga, Tai Chi, or meditation
- Avoid stimulants like caffeine and maintain adequate fluid intake
- Join a hepatitis C support group

Diarrhea (peg-interferon)

- Eat fiber like Bananas, white Rice, Applesauce, and white Toast (the "BRAT" diet)
- Avoid foods that are spicy or acidic (like citrus)
- Avoid dairy products for 2-3 days after diarrhea resolves
- Maintain adequate fluid intake (at least 6-8 non-caffeinated 8-ounce glasses/day)
- Your provider may recommend loperamide (Imodium®)* or methylcellulose (Citrucel®)* or psyllium (Metamucil®)*

Dry Skin, Rash, Sun Sensitivity (simeprevir, ribavirin)

- Use sunscreen, wear long sleeves/hat and limit sun exposure
- Avoid long, hot showers or baths
- Use moisturizing soaps (Dove®, Oil of Olay®, Cetaphil®)*
- Use moisturizing lotion after showers (Aquaphor®, Absorbase®, Lac-Hydrin®)*
- Use mild unscented laundry detergents and avoid fabric softeners
- Try rubbing or pressing on the itchy areas rather than scratching
- Use petroleum jelly on dry, itchy areas; your provider may recommend other agents to help

Fatigue (simeprevir, peg-interferon, ribavirin)

- Try low-impact exercise (walking or low-impact aerobics) as directed by provider
- Maintain adequate fluid intake (at least 6-8 non-caffeinated 8-ounce glasses/day)
- Take a short nap during the day
- Lessen your work schedule if possible
- Eat well-balanced meals daily

Fever/Chills (peg-interferon)

- Try injecting interferon at bedtime if fever/chills develop 1-3 hours after the interferon injection
- Take acetaminophen (Tylenol®)* about 30-60 minutes before weekly interferon injection
- Use ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®)* or naproxen (Aleve®)* if approved by your provider
- Try a cool sponge bath, ice pack or cold pack when you have a fever
- Use extra blankets and clothes when you have the chills
- **Notify your provider if your temperature is above 101°F for more than 24-48 hours**

Hair thinning or hair loss (peg-interferon)

- This is usually reversible
- Avoid harsh hair products such as dyes, perms, gels, sprays and mousses
- Use a mild shampoo such as baby shampoo
- Avoid braiding hair; use a wide-tooth comb or soft brush
- Wear a cap, scarf, turban, or wig

Headache (ribavirin)

- Maintain adequate fluid intake
- Keep lights dim, wear sunglasses or stay in darkened rooms
- Try to get plenty of rest
- Take acetaminophen (Tylenol®)* as advised by your provider; see instructions on page 3

Injection site reactions (peg-interferon)

- Before injecting, warm medicine by gently rolling the syringe in your hands for a minute
- Rotate/alternate your injection site – thigh and abdomen; if you are thin, use the thigh area
- Do not inject into an area that is irritated, bruised or red
- Do not rub injection site
- Apply a cold pack
- Your provider may recommend applying hydrocortisone cream or other medications to help

Insomnia (ribavirin)

- Go to sleep and wake up at the same time daily
- Do not read or watch TV in bed
- Limit daytime naps
- Try a glass of warm milk (contains tryptophan, a natural sleep agent)
- If you take ribavirin and feel jittery, take it at 4-5 p.m. instead of before bedtime
- Limit fluid intake for 2 hours before bedtime to avoid getting up to go to the bathroom at night
- Avoid caffeinated products after 4 p.m.
- Avoid heavy meals close to bedtime
- Take warm baths, read or listen to music, get a massage
- Diphenhydramine (Benadryl®)* or other medications may be recommended by your provider

Muscle and body aches (peg-interferon)

- Try injecting interferon at bedtime if body aches develop 1-3 hours after the injection
- Try low-impact exercise (walking or low-impact aerobics) as directed by your provider
- Maintain adequate fluid intake (at least 6-8 non-caffeinated 8-oz glasses/day)
- Apply warm moist heat or massage affected areas
- Take acetaminophen(Tylenol®)* or ibuprofen (Motrin®, Advil®)* if approved by your provider

Nausea (ribavirin)

- Take ribavirin with food
- Eat smaller meals
- Avoid foods/smells that trigger nausea; eat cold foods
- Eat healthy foods; avoid greasy, spicy, acidic or sweet foods
- Try ginger in ginger tea, ginger ale, or gingersnaps
- Eat some crackers or dry white toast if you feel sick in the morning
- Over-the-counter antacids or other medications may be recommended

Poor appetite (peg-interferon, ribavirin)

- Eat smaller and more frequent (4-6) meals throughout the day
- Drink protein drinks (Carnation Instant Breakfast®, Ensure®, or Boost®)*
- Eat snacks with protein (cheese, peanut butter, eggs)
- Eat whatever appeals to you even if not hungry; eat a variety of foods
- Walk before a meal

* Generic versions are usually less expensive than brand-name products. Brand names are provided as examples only, and their inclusion does not indicate an endorsement by the Veterans Health Administration or any other Government agency. Also, if a particular brand name is not mentioned, it does not mean or imply that the product is unsatisfactory.

Additional Instructions While On Treatment

Close monitoring and follow-up EVERY 2 weeks with your provider may be necessary in the beginning of treatment to prevent complications. It is important to take your medications, have laboratory tests, and return for clinic appointments as instructed. Inform your provider if you need to reschedule an appointment.

Notify your provider about all medications including over-the-counter products and dietary/herbal supplements that you are taking. Ask you provider before taking any new medications while on treatment.

Ribavirin can cause birth defects and/or fetal death. To avoid pregnancy, use at least 2 forms of contraception that includes a barrier method (such as condoms **plus** IUD or diaphragm) during treatment and for at least 6 months after treatment has finished.

Notify your provider of any adverse effects during treatment. Seek immediate medical attention if you develop any serious side effect such as chest pain; shortness of breath; swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat; blistered or peeling skin; rash on more than half of your body; sores in your mouth or throat; black or bloody stool; unusual bleeding or bruising; vision changes; dark urine; yellowing eyes or skin; or thoughts of harming yourself or someone else.

Helpful Telephone Numbers

Telephone Advice Nurse: _____ Clinic: _____

Provider: _____ Simeprevir Support Line: 1-855-565-9746

PEGASSIST Support Line: 1-877-734-2797 Peg-Intron® Support Line: 1-888-437-2608

Other Medications Approved for Your Use if Checked Off by Your Provider

For Aches/Pains

- ☐ Acetaminophen (Tylenol®): Take 1-2 tablets every 4-6 hours if needed up to maximum of 2,000 mg/day. DO NOT TAKE MORE THAN 6 tablets/day of 325 mg OR 4 tablets/day of 500 mg acetaminophen (Tylenol®).
- ☐ Ibuprofen (Advil® or Motrin®) _____mg: Take ___ tablet every 6 hours with food.
- ☐ Naproxen (Aleve®) _____mg: Take __ tablet twice a day with food.

For Rash/Itching

- ☐ Diphenhydramine (Benadryl®) _____mg: Take ___ capsules/tablets every _____ hours as needed.
- ☐ Hydroxyzine (Atarax®) _____mg: Take ___ tablet/capsule every _____ hours as needed.
- ☐ Hydrocortisone 1% cream/ointment: Apply to affected area twice daily as needed.
- ☐ Triamcinolone 0.1% cream/ointment: Apply to affected area twice daily as needed.

For Sleep

- ☐ Diphenhydramine (Benadryl®) _____mg: Take __ capsule/tablet at bedtime as needed.
- ☐ Trazodone _____mg: Take ___tablet at bedtime as needed.