

Managing Common Side Effects of CLL/SLL Drugs

Bloating/ Gassiness

Avoid/limit gas-producing foods
(beans, cabbage, etc.)

Take simethicone as needed

Maintain normal bowel habits

Heating pad on stomach

Increase activity



Constipation

Increase fluid intake

Increase fiber intake (vegetables,
whole grains, fiber supplements)

Increase activity/exercise

Take over-the-counter stool
softeners



Diarrhea

Increase fluid intake

Eat only bland or simple foods

Take over-the-counter
antidiarrheals
(loperamide/Imodium)

Notify your healthcare provider if
you have frequent or persistent
diarrhea



Fatigue/ Tiredness

Eat a well-balanced diet
regularly to improve energy
levels

Light exercise such as walking

Take short naps during the day

Maintain a regular schedule



Headache

Increase caffeine & fluid intake

Take acetaminophen (Tylenol)
per package instructions.

Headaches often occur when
treatments are first started,
and usually resolve with
time.



Muscle & Joint Pain

Take acetaminophen (Tylenol)
per package instructions.

Antihistamines (Allegra, Zyrtec,
Claritin) may help reduce bone
pain

Apply heat or ice to
the affected area



Nail Changes

Brittle fingernails and nail-
splitting is common with some
CLL/SLL treatments

Increase Biotin in your diet

Apply clear, strengthening nail
polish



Nausea & Vomiting

Modify diet to bland/simple foods
Eat small, frequent meals instead
of large meals

Notify your healthcare provider if
symptoms persist. Medication
may be needed



Swelling

Elevate your legs at rest

Increase activity

Limit salt intake

Wear compression
socks/stockings if not
contraindicated due to another
medical condition



CLL SOCIETY

This list represents only the most common and mild side effects and is not a complete list. For more information on managing side effects that are specific to each drug, click on the name of the drug within the CLL Medicine Cabinet.

Contact your healthcare provider if you have further questions about managing side effects.