Loperamide can be used with glycerine suppositories to help prevent leakage of stool. The loperamide makes the stool firmer and the glycerine suppositories empty out the back passage so that there is no stool present to cause leakage. Most people need to use the loperamide and suppositories daily to achieve this. You may need to experiment with the dosage and timing to fit in with your lifestyle.

Loperamide can also be used with Fybogel to achieve a firm bulky stool. This is easier for the back passage muscles to control and so can reduce the chances of leakage. Again you will need to experiment with the dosage and timing of both medications to gain the correct stool consistency.

If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to ask.
What is loperamide?
Loperamide is one of a group of drugs called anti-diarrhoeals. These drugs are designed to thicken your stools and so reduce diarrhoea. It will also firm up slightly soft stools.

How does it work?
Loperamide works by slowing down the passage of food through the gut and encouraging more uptake of water by the body from the waste in the lower bowel. The longer food takes to pass through the gut the more time there is for water to be absorbed from it through the gut wall. The stools that are then produced are thicker and firmer. This makes it easier to hold on when you have the urge to pass stool.

What are the risks?
Loperamide is a very safe drug to take and does not interact with other medication. It is safe to take long term to help control symptoms. It can result in constipation if too high a dose is taken.

What are the benefits?
The benefits of taking loperamide are that the passage of stools through the bowel is slower and the stools are more solid and so easier to control. For some people this is sufficient to stop the symptoms of leakage.

What are the alternatives?
There are other tablets that have a similar effect on the bowel, these include codeine phosphate and co-phenotrope but they have more side effects and so are not tried as first line.

What dose do I take?
A suggested starting dose of loperamide will have been discussed with you. It is usual to start with one capsule/tablet (2mgs) once a day but some people will require a larger dose. People vary a lot in their response to loperamide. It sometimes needs some experimentation to find the dose that will control your bowels without constipating you. The more you take the firmer your stools should become. If you take more than you need you may feel constipated. If you do not take enough your stools will remain loose or soft. It is usual to start on a low dose and build it up slowly over a few days so that you can judge how your body is responding.

Loperamide comes in capsules / tablets or as syrup. As the syrup is often used for children it can only be obtained on prescription in this country. The syrup is useful for people who only need a small dose to control their bowel and so helps to prevent constipation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount you take</th>
<th>Actual dose of loperamide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 capsule/tablet</td>
<td>2 milligrams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 teaspoon (5ml)</td>
<td>1 milligram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>½ teaspoon (2.5ml)</td>
<td>½ milligram</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is best to take loperamide half an hour before a meal. This will help to slow down the usual gut activity that is stimulated by eating. Most people find that the bowel is most active in the morning and so loperamide will help most if taken before breakfast.

The medicine starts to work within half an hour of taking it and is effective for eight to 12 hours. This means that doses taken after lunch are not likely to help much if all your problems are in the morning. However, a dose last thing at night may help with early morning frequency. Loperamide is a very safe drug which is not addictive. It can be taken in doses of up to 8 capsules (16 milligrams) per day over long periods of time.

Do not take more than 16 milligrams per day without medical advice.

Most people take loperamide on a daily basis but it is equally as useful taken when required if your stools are loose,