

### Warning

This fact sheet aims to let you know the side effects most commonly seen following the administration of your treatment. Please note that when you take any medication, there is a possibility that it causes rare side effects and it is difficult to predict which patients will be affected.

## General information for patient Paclitaxel (Taxol™)

**Date:** December 2012

**Revision:** November 2015

Medication	Administration
Paclitaxel	Intravenous infusion over 1 hour
<i>Treatment repeated every week</i>	

### Warning

This fact sheet aims to let you know the side effects most commonly seen following the administration of your treatment. Please note that when you take any medication, there is a possibility that it causes rare side effects and it is difficult to predict which patients will be affected.

## General information associated with your treatment

---

- › These medications are used to prevent the multiplication of abnormal cells and destroy them.
  - › A **blood test** will be done prior to every treatment cycle. Depending on its results and side effects of the previous treatment, the dose of medication might be adjusted or treatment might be delayed.
  - › You may experience **fatigue** during your treatments. This is usually only temporary and may be related to different reasons (medication, stress, the disease) Maintain a good level of activity but rest when you feel the need to.
  - › Your **appetite may diminish**. Eat more often, in smaller quantities.
  - › Your **sense of taste may be altered**. Enhance foods with herbs or lemon juice. Eating fruits, chewing non-sugared gums, etc. may mask the metallic taste.
  - › **Alcohol** (in small quantities) is permitted and will not affect the efficacy of the treatments.
  - › You can have an **active sexual** life during your treatments. Your partner will not be exposed to, nor harmed by chemotherapy effects. However, a decrease in your sexual drive may occur during this period. This may also be influenced by different factors (fatigue, stress etc.)
  - › In **pre-menopausal female patients**, chemotherapy may cause irregularities or cessation of the menstrual cycle during treatments. The menstrual cycle, after stopping chemotherapy, may restart or return to normal. It may also stop permanently. However, a pregnancy remains possible and a method of **contraception** is strongly recommended during treatments. Chemotherapy administered during pregnancy may harm the embryo. Breast-feeding is contra-indicated during treatment.
  - › Consult your doctor or pharmacist before you take other medications (even over the counter medications available without a prescription) or natural products. These may provoke an interaction with your treatment and diminish its efficacy, increase its toxicity or bring other significant problems.
  - › Follow the instructions given by your cancer center about the right way to handle and dispose of biological fluids (for example urine, stools) in order to protect the environment and your relatives.
  - › Be sure to always have on hand the complete list of your medications, dietary supplements, vitamins and other natural health products. Give it to your doctor and your pharmacist. It is important to make them aware of any change.
-

### Warning

This fact sheet aims to let you know the side effects most commonly seen following the administration of your treatment. Please note that when you take any medication, there is a possibility that it causes rare side effects and it is difficult to predict which patients will be affected.

## Adverse effects and management

Adverse effects	Management
<b>Nausea</b> , usually light, may occur mainly on the same day and the day following your treatment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› Before your treatment, medication to prevent nausea may be prescribed. At home, you may also have to take medication for 1 or 2 days or more, as needed.</li><li>› Communicate with a member of your healthcare team if your medication does not relieve your nausea.</li></ul>
A <b>partial or total hair loss</b> will gradually occur over several weeks (4 to 6 weeks). However, don't worry; your hair will grow back after treatments have ended.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› Use gentle shampoo.</li><li>› Avoid brushing hair vigorously.</li></ul>
A decrease in the <b>white blood cells</b> will occur about 1 to 2 weeks following treatment. You may be at higher risk to contract infections during this period.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› Wash your hands often.</li><li>› During this period, avoid coming into contact with people who have contagious diseases.</li><li>› Quickly contact a member of your healthcare team if you notice any signs of infection (fever, chills, cough, sore throat, pain while urinating...)</li><li>› Consult your doctor or go immediately to the Emergency Room if you have a fever 38,3 oC (101oF) once or 38 oC (100,4 oF) twice an hour apart.</li><li>› In case of fever, do not take acetaminophen (ex.: Tylenol®, Atasol®) and anti-inflammatory medication (ex.: Motrin®, Advil®).</li></ul>
You may experience <b>numbness or tingling of the hands and feet</b> . This phenomenon usually increases with the number of treatments received.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› If you experience these symptoms, notify a member of your healthcare team at your next visit.</li></ul>

### Warning

This fact sheet aims to let you know the side effects most commonly seen following the administration of your treatment. Please note that when you take any medication, there is a possibility that it causes rare side effects and it is difficult to predict which patients will be affected.

Adverse effects	Management
You may experience <b>allergic reactions</b> associated with paclitaxel during your treatment such as cutaneous eruptions, redness, itchiness, swelling, shortness of breath. These reactions usually occur within the first 10 minutes of the infusion and are more common with the first few treatments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› Medication to prevent allergic reactions will be prescribed prior to treatment.</li><li>› Notify the nurse immediately if you have difficulty breathing or if you experience swelling of the tongue or the throat during treatment.</li></ul>
You may experience <b>muscle and bone pain</b> that may occur a few days following your treatment. These symptoms usually last for 2-3 days.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› If this occurs, speak to a member of your healthcare team who will recommend analgesics.</li></ul>
You may sometimes experience <b>diarrhea</b> , which may start approximately 5-8 days after the start of treatment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› Drink lots of liquids (unless otherwise instructed by your doctor).</li><li>› Please contact a member of your healthcare team if you have significant diarrhea (more than 3 loose stools per day) for more than 24 hours.</li><li>› If you have diarrhea with fever, contact immediately a member of your health care team and go to the Emergency Room.</li></ul>

## Special Considerations

After your treatment, it is recommended that you do not drive a vehicle or perform activities requiring attention, as you might feel sleepy or dizzy.

Pharmacist: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

from \_\_\_\_ h to \_\_\_\_ h (Monday to Friday)