

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 Patients

DCF protocol

Date : June 13th, 2014

Revision: June 2016

Medication	Administration
Docetaxel	Intravenous infusion over 1 hour on day 1
Cisplatin	Intravenous infusion over a few hours on day 1
Fluorouracil	Continuous intravenous infusion over 5 days
<i>Cycle repeated every 3 weeks</i>	

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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. Depending on its results and side effects of the previous treatment, the dose of the medication might be adjusted or the treatment might be delayed.
- › Your **appetite may diminish**. Eat more often, in smaller quantities.
- › Your **sense of taste may be altered**. Enhance foods with *fines herbes* or lemon juice. Eating fruits and non sugared candies, 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 various factors (fatigue, stress, etc.)
- › For **male patients**, the sperm count may be affected and negative effects on the embryo may occur. In fact, the production of spermatozooids may be reduced or completely absent during treatments. In certain patients, this reduction of fertility may be permanent, may get better or return to normal after the treatments have stopped. This reduction of **fertility** does not prevent erection or sexual activity. A pregnancy remains possible. If you have sex with a woman of childbearing age it is strongly recommended to use a method of contraception during the treatment.
- › In **pre-menopausal female patients** chemotherapy may cause irregularities or cessation of the **menstrual cycle** during treatment. The menstrual cycle may restart or return to normal after the end of treatment. The menstrual cycle may also stop permanently. However, a pregnancy remains possible and chemotherapy administered during pregnancy may harm the embryo. A birth control method is strongly recommended during treatment. 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 or increase side effects.
- › 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.

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Adverse effects and their management

Adverse effects	Management
Severe nausea and vomiting may occur and persist up to 5 days following cisplatin.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› You will be prescribed medication to prevent nausea to be taken prior to treatment. At home, you will take medication on a regular basis and others as needed for a few days following your treatment.› Communicate with a member of your healthcare team if the nausea or vomiting is not relieved by your medication.
Usually, a total hair loss will occur. In general, this may happen 2 to 3 weeks following treatment. However, don't worry; your hair should grow back after treatments have ended.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Use a gentle shampoo.
A decrease in the white blood cells will occur about 1 to 2 weeks following treatment. You may be at higher risk of infections during this period.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Wash your hands often.› During this period, avoid coming into contact with people who have contagious diseases.› Contact a member of your healthcare team quickly if you notice any signs of infection (fever, chills, cough, sore throat, pain while urinating...)› Consult your doctor or go immediately to the Emergency Room if you have a fever 38,3 °C (101°F) once or 38 °C (100.4 °F) twice an hour apart.› In case of fever, do not take acetaminophen (ex.: Tylenol®, Atasol®) and anti-inflammatory medication (ex.: Motrin®, Advil®).
A decrease in platelets will occur about 1 to 2 weeks following treatment. You may bruise or bleed more easily than you normally do.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Use a tooth brush with soft bristles.› Check with your pharmacist before taking medications with Aspirin®, ibuprofen or other anti-inflammatory drugs.› Contact a member of your healthcare team if you bruise more easily than you normally do or if you have a tendency to bleed easily from the nose or the gums.

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You may experience a decrease in red blood cells following your treatment. This phenomenon is called anemia and is characterized by signs of fatigue, pale color, dizziness and shortness of breath.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Keep active but respect signs of fatigue your body gives you; rest when you feel the need to.› If you notice one or any of these effects, contact a member of your healthcare team.
You may experience allergic reactions during your treatment with docetaxel such as cutaneous eruptions, redness, itchiness, swelling or shortness of breath. These reactions are more frequent during the first few minutes of the infusion and more common during the first 2 infusions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Dexamethasone will be prescribed to prevent this reaction. Some other drugs may be prescribed, if necessary.› Notify the nurse immediately if you have difficulty breathing or if you experience swelling of the tongue or throat during treatment.
Ulcers in the mouth and the throat may appear approximately 7 to 10 days following the start of your treatment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Gently and regularly brush your teeth after each meal and at bedtime.› Rinse your mouth with a solution of water and salt with or without baking soda. Gargle 4 times a day – after every meal and at bedtime. Do not drink or eat for one hour after you gargle.› Mouthwashes without alcohol found in stores are a good alternative.› If you notice ulcers, redness or painful areas in your mouth, contact a member of your healthcare team.
You may sometimes experience diarrhea , which may start a few days following the start of your treatment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Drink lots of liquids unless otherwise instructed by your doctor.› 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.› If you have with diarrhea with fever, contact immediately a member of your health care team.
You may experience fatigue during your treatments. This is usually only temporary and may be related to different reasons (medication, stress, the disease).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Maintain a good level of activity but rest when you feel the need to.

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Leg weakness, numbness or tingling of hand and feet may occur. These symptoms usually increase with the number of treatments given.	› If you experience these symptoms, speak to a member of your healthcare team at your next visit.
You may experience muscle and bone pain that may occur a few days following your treatment. These symptoms usually last for 4 to 7 days.	› If this occurs, speak to a member of your healthcare team who will recommend analgesics.
Cisplatin may affect your kidneys .	› Drink plenty of water or fluid (10-12 glasses of 230ml or 8oz.) daily for the 48 to 72 hours following your treatment (unless otherwise instructed by your doctor) and urinate frequently. › Notify a member of your healthcare team if you urinate less than normally.
Cisplatin may cause ringing in your ears and rarely hearing loss .	› If you experience these symptoms, notify a member of your healthcare team at your next visit.
Your eyes may become excessively teary , itchy and may or may not develop redness.	› Contact a member of your healthcare team who can recommend appropriate treatment.
Your skin may become more sensitive to the sun .	› Avoid going into the sun. › Use sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher. › Wear a hat.
Your skin may become drier . Redness and itchiness may develop.	› Use a non perfumed moisturizing cream as needed.
You may experience numbness or tingling in your hands and feet with or without redness and swelling. This is called hand and foot syndrome and is rarely painful.	› Notify a member of your healthcare team if these symptoms occur and affect your daily activities. Some measures can be recommended.
Nails changes may occur.	› To prevent nails changes, soak them into ice during the infusion of docetaxel or wear cold gloves if they are available at your cancer clinic. › At your next visit, notify a member of your healthcare team if nails changes occur.

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Gradual fluid retention may occur with consecutive treatments and may present itself by swelling of the feet and hands, shortness of breath or rapid weight gain.	Dexamethasone will be prescribed to prevent this reaction. Notify your doctor if you are gaining weight rapidly, if you experience some swelling or if you are easily short of breath.
Rare adverse effects that can be severe or serious to communicate quickly to your doctor	
If you experience palpitations of the heart, chest pain and/or shortness of breath.	Immediately go to the Emergency Room.

Special Consideration

You must avoid consuming **grapefruit**, Seville orange, starfruit, pomelo, pomegranate or foods containing the aforementioned fruits because of an interaction that could increase the side effects of your treatment.

Pharmacist : _____

Phone: _____

From _____ AM to _____ PM (Monday to Friday)