

### 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 – trastuzumab weekly

**Date:** April 2016

**Revision date:** April 2016

Medication	Administration
Paclitaxel	Intravenous infusion over 60 minutes
Trastuzumab	Intravenous infusion over 30 minutes if no reaction occurred during the first infusion*
	*First dose is always administered over 90 minutes
<i>Treatment repeated every week</i>	

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### General Information associated with your treatment:

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- › These medications are used to prevent the multiplication of abnormal cells and destroy them.
- › A **blood test** will be done prior to every cycle. Depending on the results and side effects of the previous treatment, the dose of the medication might be adjusted or the 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 *finer 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 different factors (fatigue, stress etc.).
- › 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.
- › 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.
- › 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.
- › Consult your doctor or pharmacist before you take other medications (even over the counter medications available without a prescription) or **natural health products** or if you need to receive a **vaccine**. These may provoke an interaction with your treatment and diminish its efficacy or increase side effects.

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## Adverse effects and their 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>› Contact 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 should 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> may occur during treatment. You may be at higher risk of infections.	<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>› Contact a member of your healthcare team quickly 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 °C (101 °F) once or 38 °C (100,4 °F) 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>muscle and bone pain</b> that may occur a few days following your treatment with <b>paclitaxel</b> . These symptoms usually last for 2 to 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 experience <b>numbness or tingling of the hands and feet</b> with <b>paclitaxel</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>

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You may experience <b>allergic reactions</b> during your treatment with <b>paclitaxel</b> such as cutaneous eruptions, redness, itchiness, swelling, shortness of breath or pain to chest, abdomen, back and pelvis. These reactions usually occur within the first 10 to 15 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 pain, redness, itchiness, swelling of the tongue or throat during treatment.</li></ul>
You may experience <b>allergic reactions</b> with <b>trastuzumab</b> usually within the first hour of infusion. Fever and chills are relatively frequent during the first infusion, rarely with subsequent infusions. Nausea, pain, cough, headaches, dizziness, trembling, cutaneous eruptions may also occur.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› Notify the nurse if these symptoms occur during the administration of the drug. Medications can be given to alleviate these symptoms.</li><li>› If you reacted during the first infusion, medications to prevent these symptoms could be administered prior subsequent infusions.</li></ul>
<b>Pain, irritation, swelling or a burning sensation</b> at the injection site may occur during treatment with <b>paclitaxel</b> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› Immediately advise your nurse if you experience this malaise during infusion.</li></ul>
Rare adverse effects that can be severe or serious to communicate quickly to your doctor	
You may experience <b>shortness of breath, swelling</b> of the ankles and rapid heartbeats.  This could be related to some harmful effects of <b>trastuzumab</b> on your heart.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› If you notice any one these effects, contact a member of your healthcare team as soon as possible.</li></ul>

### Special Considerations

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

After your treatment with **paclitaxel**, 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)