

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

Protocol : DOCETAXEL (TAXOTERE^{MD}) every 3 weeks

MEDICATION	ADMINISTRATION
Docetaxel (Taxotere ^{md})	Intravenous infusion over 1 hour on day 1
<i>Treatment repeated every 3 weeks</i>	

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General Information associated with your treatment

- ❑ This treatment is 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.
- ❑ For **male patients**, the sperm count may be affected. In fact, the production of spermatozooids may be reduced or completely absent during treatments. This reduction of **fertility** does not prevent erection or sexual activity. In certain patients, this reduction of fertility may be permanent, may ameliorate or return to normal after the treatments have stopped.
- ❑ 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 may be 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 chemotherapy.
- ❑ You can have an **active sexual** life during your treatments. However, a decrease in your sexual drive may occur during this period. This may also be influenced by different factors (fatigue, stress etc.).
- ❑ 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.
- ❑ 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 body fluids (for example urine, stools) in order to protect the environment and your relatives.
- ❑ Be sure to always have at hand the complete list of your medications, dietary supplements, vitamins and other natural health products. Give it to you doctor and your pharmacist. It is important to make them aware of any change.

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Adverse Effects and Management

ADVERSE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
Nausea , usually light, may occur mainly on the same day and the day following your treatment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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.• Communicate with your doctor or pharmacist if your medication does not relieve your nausea.
Total loss of body hair will occur, in general, 2-4 weeks after the treatment. However, don't worry, your hair will grow back after the treatments have ended.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use a gentle shampoo.
A decrease in the white blood cells will occur 1 week following treatment. You may be at higher risk to contact 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.• Quickly contact a member of your healthcare team 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®, Aleve®).

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You may experience allergic reactions during your treatment (cutaneous eruptions, redness, itchiness, shortness of breath). These reactions are more frequent during the first 2 infusions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dexamethasone will be prescribed to prevent this reaction• Notify the nurse immediately if you have difficulty breathing or if you experience swelling of the tongue or the throat during treatment.
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.
You may sometimes experience diarrhea .	<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 diarrhea with fever, contact immediately a member of your health care team and go to the Emergency Room.
Mouth ulcers may appear following your treatment. These ulcers can also occur at the throat.	<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.

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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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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 4-7 days.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If this occurs, speak to a member of your healthcare team who will recommend analgesics.
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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dexamethasone will be prescribed to prevent this reaction.• Notify your physician if you experience rapid weight gain, shortness of breath or if you feel swollen.
Nail changes may occur.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To prevent nail 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 nail changes occur.
A skin rash , usually mild, may occur following your treatment. It generally involves the trunk, the arms and legs and might be associated with itchiness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consult a member of your healthcare team who will recommend appropriate measures.
Rare adverse effects that can be severe or serious to communicate quickly to your doctor	
You may experience cough, shortness of breath or feeling out of breath .	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consult immediately a member of your healthcare team or go to the Emergency Room.

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Special Consideration

You must avoid **grapefruit** juice or grapefruit because of an interaction that could increase the side effects of docetaxel.

Pharmacist: _____

Phone: _____

From ____h to ____h (Monday to Friday)