



DOCETAXEL

OTHER NAMES: Taxotere®

PURPOSE: Docetaxel is a drug used in the treatment of cancer. It interferes with the growth and spread of tumor cells.

ADMINISTRATION: Docetaxel is given by injection into a vein.

SIDE EFFECTS: Not all patients will experience all side effects.

SIDE EFFECT	MANAGEMENT
Swelling / fluid retention- Hands and feet (legs) may swell and you may notice a gain in weight due to fluid retention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You will be given a medication (dexamethasone) by injection or by mouth to lessen or prevent this Take prescribed dexamethasone exactly as ordered. Report swelling to your doctor or nurse.
Lowered white blood cell counts. You may be more susceptible to infection, cold and flu and experience symptoms such as fever, cough, sore throat, chills and shakes, pain and burning when you pass urine.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wash hands often and avoid people with infections if possible. Contact your doctor or nurse immediately if your temperature is 38°C (100°F) or above or if you have any other signs of infection. Do not take acetaminophen (Tylenol® or others) for fever or other signs of infection unless approved by your doctor or nurse.
Lowered platelet counts which may cause unusual bleeding or bruising.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brush teeth gently with a soft toothbrush Blow nose gently Prevent constipation Avoid cuts, burns and falls Report persistent bleeding to your doctor Do not take ASA (Aspirin® or others) or any nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (ie., naproxen, ibuprofen, indomethacin, etc.) if you have low platelets. Check with your doctor or pharmacist if starting new medications.
Hair loss including eyebrows, eyelashes and body hair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hair will grow back after treatments are completed. The colour and texture may be different. Protect your head from sun or cold with a hat, scarf, or wig. Apply sunscreen before exposure to the sun. Protect your eyes from dust with glasses or sunglasses.

SIDE EFFECT	MANAGEMENT
Mouth sores, including the lining of the mouth, throat, tongue, and gums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report sore mouth to your doctor or nurse. • Use a soft toothbrush, floss and brush gently. • Rinse with club soda or other prescribed mouthwash. Do not use commercial mouthwashes.
Nausea and vomiting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You may be given medications to prevent or control nausea and vomiting. • Drink plenty of fluids. • Eat often in small amounts. • If vomiting lasts more than 24 hours, contact your doctor or nurse.
Numbness, tingling or burning in hands and feet (fingers and toes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report this to your doctor or nurse. • This may improve with a reduced dose or after treatments are completed.
Fatigue and lack of energy may occur.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take short rest periods when needed • Regular light exercise may decrease fatigue.
Allergic reactions - signs include flushing of face, rash, itching, hives, difficulty breathing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact your nurse or doctor immediately if you suspect an allergic reaction.
Muscle weakness with joint or muscle pain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report this to your doctor.
Other symptoms you may experience include rash or nail changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report these to your doctor.

OTHER IMPORTANT PRECAUTIONS:

- Other medications may interact with docetaxel. Do not start taking new medications or herbal products without checking with your doctor or pharmacist. Tell your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist if you are taking any other prescription or non-prescription medicine, vitamin, or herbal product.
- Inform other doctors, dentists, or pharmacists that you are receiving docetaxel.
- Inform your doctor, nurse, and pharmacist if you develop any new allergies or sensitivities.
- Discuss fertility and birth control with your doctor if necessary.
- It is very important to have blood counts and other lab tests as ordered. Your dose may be altered accordingly.
- If you experience any symptoms or problems not listed above, inform your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist.

If you have any questions regarding this or any other drug therapy, please phone your cancer centre.

Cross Cancer Institute – (780) 432-8771, Tom Baker Cancer Centre – (403) 521-3764
 Central Alberta Cancer Centre – (403) 343-4802, Grande Prairie Cancer Centre – (780) 538-7288
 Lethbridge Cancer Centre – (403) 329-0633, Medicine Hat Cancer Centre – (403) 529-8817

OR