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Docetaxel: Patient drug information

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(For additional information [see "Docetaxel: Drug information"](#) and [see "Docetaxel: Pediatric drug information"](#))

Brand Names: US Docefrez [DSC]; Taxotere

Brand Names: Canada Docetaxel for Injection; Docetaxel Injection; Taxotere

Warning

- Very bad and sometimes deadly allergic reactions have happened with this drug. Do not take this drug if you have ever had an allergic reaction to this drug or to other drugs that have polysorbate 80 in them.
- The risk of death that may rarely happen with this drug is raised in people with liver problems and in people who get high doses of this drug. The risk is also raised in people with a certain type of lung cancer who have been treated with a platinum-based chemo drug in the past. Do not take this drug if you have liver disease. Talk with your doctor.
- This drug may cause you to swell or keep fluid in your body. Tell your doctor if you have swelling, weight gain, or trouble breathing.
- This drug may lower the ability of your bone marrow to make blood cells that your body needs. This can lead to needing a blood transfusion and very bad and sometimes deadly bleeding problems or infections. Tell your doctor right away if you have signs of infection like fever, chills, or sore throat; any bruising or bleeding; or if you feel very tired or weak.
- Do not take this drug if you have a low white blood cell count.
- Have blood work checked as you have been told by the doctor. Talk with the doctor.

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat cancer.

What do I need to tell my doctor BEFORE I take this drug?

- If you have an allergy to docetaxel or any other part of this drug.
- If you are allergic to any drugs like this one, any other drugs, foods, or other substances. Tell your doctor about the allergy and what signs you had, like rash; hives; itching; shortness of breath;

wheezing; cough; swelling of face, lips, tongue, or throat; or any other signs.

- If you are breast-feeding or plan to breast-feed.

This drug may interact with other drugs or health problems.

Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all of your drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe for you to take this drug with all of your drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug without checking with your doctor.

What are some things I need to know or do while I take this drug?

All products:

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- You may have more chance of getting an infection. Wash hands often. Stay away from people with infections, colds, or flu.
- If you have upset stomach, throwing up, loose stools (diarrhea), or are not hungry, talk with your doctor. There may be ways to lower these side effects.
- Your doctor may start you on a drug to help with swelling.
- Talk with your doctor before getting any vaccines. Use with this drug may either raise the chance of an infection or make the vaccine not work as well.
- You may bleed more easily. Be careful and avoid injury. Use a soft toothbrush and an electric razor.
- This drug may add to the chance of getting some types of cancer. Talk with the doctor.
- Hair loss is common with this drug. Most of the time, normal hair growth has come back. Sometimes, hair growth has not gone back to normal. Talk with the doctor.
- If you are 65 or older, use this drug with care. You could have more side effects.
- This drug may cause harm to the unborn baby if you take it while you are pregnant. If you are pregnant or you get pregnant while taking this drug, call your doctor right away.
- Use birth control that you can trust to prevent pregnancy while taking this drug.

Products that contain alcohol:

- Avoid driving and doing other tasks or actions that call for you to be alert for 1 to 2 hours after getting this drug and until you see how this drug affects you.
- This drug has alcohol in it. This may cause you to feel drunk during and after treatment. Tell your doctor if you have confusion, feel drunk, stumble, or feel very sleepy during treatment or within 1 to 2 hours after treatment.
- Talk with your doctor before you drink alcohol or use other drugs and natural products that slow your actions.

What are some side effects that I need to call my doctor about right away?

WARNING/CAUTION: Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.

- Signs of infection like fever, chills, very bad sore throat, ear or sinus pain, cough, more sputum or change in color of sputum, pain with passing urine, mouth sores, or wound that will not heal.
- Signs of bleeding like throwing up blood or throw up that looks like coffee grounds; coughing up blood; blood in the urine; black, red, or tarry stools; bleeding from the gums; vaginal bleeding that is not normal; bruises without a reason or that get bigger; or any bleeding that is very bad or that you cannot stop.
- Signs of liver problems like dark urine, feeling tired, not hungry, upset stomach or stomach pain, light-colored stools, throwing up, or yellow skin or eyes.
- Shortness of breath, a big weight gain, or swelling in the arms or legs.
- Very bad dizziness or passing out.
- Very upset stomach or throwing up.
- A burning, numbness, or tingling feeling that is not normal.
- Feeling very tired or weak.
- Chest pain or pressure or a fast heartbeat.
- A heartbeat that does not feel normal.
- Very bad headache.
- Muscle pain.
- This drug may cause tissue damage if the drug leaks from the vein. Tell your nurse if you have any redness, burning, pain, swelling, blisters, skin sores, or leaking of fluid where the drug is going into your body.
- This drug may cause a certain eye problem called cystoid macular edema (CME). You may need to have eye exams while using this drug. Call your doctor right away if you have a change in eyesight like blurred eyesight or loss of eyesight.

What are some other side effects of this drug?

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother you or do not go away:

- Upset stomach or throwing up.
- Loose stools (diarrhea).
- Mouth irritation or mouth sores.
- Feeling tired or weak.
- Hair loss.
- Change in nails.
- Change in taste.
- Hard stools (constipation).
- Not hungry.
- Joint pain.
- Eye redness.
- Tearing.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your doctor. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

How is this drug best taken?

Use this drug as ordered by your doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

- It is given as an infusion into a vein over a period of time.
- A steroid drug like dexamethasone will be given before this drug to lower side effects. Talk with the doctor. Tell the doctor if the steroid drug is not used as your doctor has told you.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

- Call your doctor to find out what to do.

How do I store and/or throw out this drug?

- If you need to store this drug at home, talk with your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist about how to store it.

General drug facts

- If your symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your doctor.
- Do not share your drugs with others and do not take anyone else's drugs.
- Keep a list of all your drugs (prescription, natural products, vitamins, OTC) with you. Give this list to your doctor.
- Talk with the doctor before starting any new drug, including prescription or OTC, natural products, or vitamins.
- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Check with your pharmacist about how to throw out unused drugs.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

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