

Docetaxel

Names	The generic drug name is docetaxel (doe-se-TAKS-sel). Taxotere® is a brand name. There may be other names for this medication.
How is It Administered?	This medicine is given intravenously (IV), which means it is given through a tube placed in a vein, usually in your arm, wrist, hand, or chest.
Why am I Receiving Docetaxel?	This drug treats breast, metastatic prostate, advanced stomach, head and neck, and non-small cell lung cancers.
How Does it Work?	<p>Cancer is a group of diseases in which abnormal cells multiply (reproduce) without control. Both normal and cancer cells go through cycles of multiplying, growing, and resting. Your chemotherapy schedule, usually given in <i>cycles</i>, is based upon the type of cancer you have, how fast your cancer cells multiply, and when each drug is the most likely to be effective.</p> <p>The faster cells are multiplying, the more likely it is that chemotherapy will damage or kill those cells. Unfortunately, chemo does not know the difference between cancer cells and normal cells that reproduce frequently. The normal types of cells most likely to be affected by chemo are the cells that line the digestive tract (mouth, stomach, intestines), hair follicles, and blood cells. These normal cells will eventually grow back and be healthy. During treatment, however, you may have side effects.</p> <p>Docetaxel is in a class of drugs known as taxanes or plant alkaloids. It affects tiny structures (microtubules) inside the cells and interferes with their ability to make the proteins they need and to reproduce.</p>
What Should I Tell My Doctor Before I Begin?	<p>Tell your doctor if you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• are allergic reaction to docetaxel or polysorbate 80• are taking other medications• have or have had liver disease• have ever been treated with cisplatin or carboplatin for lung cancer <p>This drug may interact with other medications. Tell your doctor and pharmacist about <u>all</u> prescription or over-the-counter medications, vitamins, herbal, or diet supplements that you are taking.</p>

What Are Some Possible Side Effects?

- Numbness and tingling in fingers and toes (peripheral neuropathy)
- Fluid retention: swelling in ankles or abdominal area, weight gain
- Nausea, diarrhea (vomiting is less common)
- Mouth or throat sores, changes in taste
- Hair loss, nail and skin changes
- Fatigue, weakness, muscle aches, joint/bone pain
- Infection
- Decreased fertility
- Low platelet count - higher risk of bleeding
- Low white blood cell count – higher risk of infection
- Higher results on blood tests measuring liver function (will return to normal when treatment ends)

How Can I Manage These Side Effects?

- To help avoid infections, stay away from people with colds or other infections. **Wash your hands often.** Talk to your doctor before you have any vaccinations, such as a flu shot.
- If you are fatigued, take rests during the day, limit your activities, and do an activity at a time of day when you feel a bit more energetic. Learn to ask for and accept help with household and daily chores.
- Be careful when handling sharp objects. Avoid rough sports or other situations that could cause bruising or injury. Use an electric razor.
- You may be given prednisone to help prevent fluid retention.
- Ask your doctor about medication to help prevent or lessen nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or constipation.
- Mouth care is very important. To minimize mouth problems, rinse your mouth with a mixture of ½ tsp of baking soda in 8 ounce of water after every meal and at bedtime. Brush your teeth and gums often with a soft toothbrush. (Soften it further by running it under warm water). Avoid smoking, alcohol, and mouthwashes containing alcohol.
- Avoid sun exposure. Wear sunblock with SPF 30 or higher and protective clothing. If you get a rash, Do not put anything on it unless your doctor or nurse says you may. Keep the area clean and dry.
- If you vomit or have diarrhea, you are at risk for dehydration. To prevent dehydration drink at least 2-3 quarts of fluid, especially water, every 24 hours, unless your doctor has told you to watch your fluid intake because of another medical condition.

When Should I
Call the
Doctor?

Call your doctor immediately if you have:

- signs of fluid retention: swelling of the hands, feet, ankles, lower legs, or stomach area; sudden weight gain; shortness of breath; chest pain;; cough; hiccups; breathing very fast; pounding heartbeat; pale/greyish skin. (Docetaxel may cause a serious/life-threatening build-up of fluid, which usually starts around the 5th treatment cycle.)
- signs of infection: fever of 100.5°F (38°C) or higher, chills, cough, sore throat, pain or burning upon urination; redness or tenderness along a vein, at an IV site, or at any other wound or skin irritation
- signs of an allergic reaction: itching or hives, swelling in your face or hands, swelling or tingling in your mouth or throat, chest tightness, trouble breathing, dizziness, or palpitations
- unusual bruising or bleeding: bleeding lasting more than 10-15 minutes or causing dizziness; black or bloody stools; bloody or coffee ground vomit;; blood in your urine or mucus, unusually heavy menstrual bleeding, spontaneous sum or nose bleed; superficial bleeding into the skin (petechiae – looks like red/purple pinpoint-sized spots)

Call your doctor as soon as possible if you have:

- uncontrolled nausea, vomiting, or mouth sores not relieved by prescribed medication or that prevents you from eating or drinking
- weight gain of over 5 pounds in 1 week or diarrhea
- changes in the appearance of your fingernails or toenails, mild rash, or hair loss
- mild swelling in your hands or feet
- muscle pain
- diarrhea of 4 stools a day or diarrhea with weakness/lightheadedness

What Else
Should I Know
About
Docetaxel?

- Docetaxel injection may cause severe allergic reactions. Call your doctor immediately if you have any of the signs of allergic reaction listed above.
- You will need to have routine blood tests while you are receiving this medicine. Keep all appointments with your doctor and lab.
- Speak with your doctor or nurse if you plan to have children. Ask for information on sperm or egg banking.
- If you would like more information about docetaxel, talk to your doctor or pharmacist.