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2. Taxotere

# Taxotere

**Generic name:** [docetaxel](#) [ doe-se-TAX-el ]

**Drug class:** [Mitotic inhibitors](#)

Medically reviewed by [Philip Thornton, DipPharm](#). Last updated on Aug 20, 2023.

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## What is Taxotere?

Taxotere is a [cancer medicine](#) that interferes with the growth and spread of cancer cells in the body.

Taxotere is used to treat [breast cancer](#), lung cancer, [prostate cancer](#), stomach cancer, and head/neck cancer.

Taxotere may also be used for purposes not listed in this medication guide.

## Warnings

Taxotere can cause severe side effects including death, especially if you receive high doses, if you have liver disease, or if you have non-small cell lung cancer and you have been treated in the past with chemotherapy that contains platinum (cisplatin, carboplatin, oxaliplatin).

**Taxotere can also cause a life-threatening allergic reaction.** Get emergency medical help if you have hives, a red skin rash, trouble breathing, if you feel like you might pass out, or if you have swelling of your face, lips, tongue, or throat.

**You may have swelling in your intestines, which could cause death quickly.** Call your doctor right away if you have stomach pain or tenderness, diarrhea, or fever.

You will be given steroid medication to help prevent fluid retention. Tell your doctor if you have swelling in your lower legs, rapid weight gain, or shortness of breath

Taxotere can lower blood cells that help your body fight infections and help your blood to clot. Your blood will need to be tested often.

## Before taking this medicine

You should not receive Taxotere if you have:

- a low white blood cell (WBC) count; or

- a history of severe allergic reaction to docetaxel or to any medicine that contains polysorbate 80.

Tell your doctor about your complete health history and all medications you have used. docetaxel can cause severe side effects including death, especially:

- if you receive high doses;
- if you have liver disease; or
- if you have non-small cell lung cancer and you have been treated in the past with chemotherapy that contains platinum (cisplatin, carboplatin, oxaliplatin).

To make sure Taxotere is safe for you, tell your doctor if you have ever had:

- liver disease;
- heart disease;
- tumor lysis syndrome (rapid breakdown of cancer cells);
- fluid retention; or
- if you drink alcohol.

Using Taxotere may increase your risk of developing other types of cancer (such as leukemia, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, or kidney cancer). This risk may continue for several months or years after you have received Taxotere. Ask your doctor about your specific risk.

Docetaxel can harm an unborn baby or cause birth defects **if the mother or the father is using this medicine.**

- **If you are a woman**, do not use docetaxel if you are pregnant. You may need to have a negative pregnancy test before starting this treatment. Use effective birth control to prevent pregnancy while you are using this medicine and for at least 6 months after your last dose.
- **If you are a man**, use effective birth control if your sex partner is able to get pregnant. Keep using birth control for at least 3 months after your last dose.
- Tell your doctor right away if a pregnancy occurs while either the mother or the father is using Taxotere.

Docetaxel may affect fertility (ability to have children) in men. It may be harder for a man to get a woman pregnant while he is using Taxotere. **Birth control should still be used to prevent pregnancy because docetaxel can harm an unborn baby.**

**Do not breastfeed while using Taxotere**, and for at least 1 week after your last dose.

**i** [Taxotere pregnancy and breastfeeding warnings](#) (more detail)

## How is Taxotere given?

Taxotere is given as an infusion into a vein. A healthcare provider will give you this injection. ou may receive other cancer medicines at the same time.

Taxotere can be harmful if it gets on your skin during an IV infusion. If this happens, wash right away with soap and water. **Tell your caregivers if you feel any burning, pain, or swelling around the IV needle when docetaxel is injected.**

You may need frequent medical tests to be sure this medicine is not causing harmful effects. Your cancer treatments may be delayed based on the results. Your vision may also need to be checked.

You may be given steroid medication to help prevent fluid retention. Keep using the steroid for as long as your doctor has prescribed.

 [Detailed Taxotere dosage information](#)

## What happens if I miss a dose?

Call your doctor for instructions if you miss an appointment for your injection, or if you miss a dose of your steroid medication.

## What happens if I overdose?

Seek emergency medical attention or call the Poison Help line at 1-800-222-1222.

## What should I avoid while receiving Taxotere?

Taxotere may impair your thinking or reactions for a short time after each injection. Be careful if you drive or do anything that requires you to be alert.

Avoid being near people who are sick or have infections. Tell your doctor at once if you develop signs of infection.

Avoid activities that may increase your risk of bleeding or injury. Use extra care to prevent bleeding while shaving or brushing your teeth.

Taxotere contains alcohol and may cause a drunken feeling when the medicine is injected into your vein. Avoid drinking alcohol on the day of your Taxotere injection.

Docetaxel can pass into body fluids (urine, feces, vomit). For at least 48 hours after you receive a dose, avoid allowing your body fluids to come into contact with your hands or other surfaces. Caregivers should wear rubber gloves while cleaning up a patient's body fluids, handling contaminated trash or laundry or changing diapers. Wash hands before and after removing gloves. Wash soiled clothing and linens separately from other laundry.

## Taxotere side effects

**You may have a life-threatening allergic reaction.** Get emergency medical help if you have **signs of an allergic reaction to Taxotere**: hives, red skin rash; wheezing, chest tightness, trouble breathing; feeling like you might pass out; swelling of your face, lips, tongue, or throat.

**You may have swelling in your intestines, which could cause death quickly.** Call your doctor right away if you have stomach pain or tenderness, diarrhea, or fever.

Some side effects may occur during the injection. Tell your caregiver if you feel light-headed, or if you have trouble breathing or fast or irregular heartbeats.

Also call your doctor at once if you have:

- pain, burning, irritation, or skin changes where the injection was given;
- sudden vision problems including blurred vision or loss of vision;
- redness or swelling in your arms or legs;
- skin rash, redness, blistering, peeling, bleeding, or small red or white bumps that contain pus;
- numbness, burning, or tingling in your hands or feet;
- muscle weakness in your arms, legs, feet, or hands;
- swelling, rapid weight gain, shortness of breath;
- **signs of tumor cell breakdown** - weakness, muscle cramps, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fast or slow heart rate, tingling around your mouth;
- **a feeling of being drunk** - confusion, stumbling, extreme drowsiness;
- **liver problems** - upper stomach pain, loss of appetite, dark urine, clay-colored stools, jaundice (yellowing of the skin or eyes); or
- **low blood cell counts** - fever, chills, tiredness, mouth sores, skin sores, easy bruising, unusual bleeding, pale skin, cold hands and feet, feeling light-headed.

Side effects may be more likely in older adults.

Your cancer treatments may be delayed or permanently discontinued if you have certain side effects.

Common Taxotere side effects may include:

- allergic reactions;
- tissue damage (if docetaxel leaks into tissues);
- swelling, warmth, tenderness, redness, dryness or darkened skin where the injection was given;
- low blood cell counts, infections;
- mouth or lip sores, altered sense of taste;
- nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite;
- constipation, diarrhea;
- feeling short of breath;
- eye redness, watery eyes;
- feeling weak or tired;
- swelling in your hands, feet, or face;
- muscle or joint pain;
- hair loss (may be permanent in some cases); or
- fingernail or toenail changes.

This is not a complete list of side effects and others may occur. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

 [Taxotere side effects](#) (more detail)

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## What other drugs will affect Taxotere?

Taxotere contains alcohol. Using other drugs that can make you sleepy can worsen the feeling of being drunk. Ask your doctor before taking a sleeping pill, opioid pain medicine, a muscle relaxer, or medicine for anxiety, depression, or seizures.

Other drugs may interact with docetaxel, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal products. Tell your doctor about all your current medicines and any medicine you start or stop using.

 [Taxotere drug interactions](#) (more detail)

## Does Taxotere interact with my other drugs?

Enter medications to view a detailed interaction report using our [Drug Interaction Checker](#).

Taxotere

+

Enter a drug name

Add

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- [Breastfeeding](#)

## Patient resources

### Other brands

[Docefrez](#)

## Professional resources

- [Taxotere prescribing information](#)
- [Docetaxel \(AHFS Monograph\)](#)

## Related treatment guides

- [Prostate Cancer](#)
- [Breast Cancer](#)
- [Non Small Cell Lung Cancer](#)
- [Breast Cancer, Metastatic](#)
- [Head and Neck Cancer](#)
- [Gastric Cancer](#)

## Further information

Remember, keep this and all other medicines out of the reach of children, never share your medicines with others, and use Taxotere only for the indication prescribed.

Always consult your healthcare provider to ensure the information displayed on this page applies to your personal circumstances.

[Medical Disclaimer](#)

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### DRUG STATUS

#### Availability

**Rx** Prescription only

#### [Pregnancy & Lactation](#)

 Risk data available

#### CSA Schedule\*

**N/A** Not a controlled drug



#### Approval History

**10+ years** FDA approved 1996



## User Reviews & Ratings

5.2 / 10

[11 Reviews](#)

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