

# Paclitaxel (Taxol®)

Paclitaxel is an anti-cancer medicine that stops cell growth and division. This medicine is used to treat many types of cancer.

## How Is It Given?

- clear liquid by IV (intravenous)

## What Side Effects May Occur?

This is a partial list of the side effects you may have with this medicine. You may have some, all or none of those listed, or you may have other side effects not listed. Most side effects last only a short time.

### Common:

- lowered white blood cell and red blood cell counts (occurs 1 to 2 weeks after treatment)
- hair loss
- facial flushing
- mouth sores
- bone, joint pain or both for 2 to 3 days after treatment
- muscle pain and weakness for 2 to 5 days after treatment
- numb or tingling hands or feet — may occur within 24 hours but usually begins after several doses
- fatigue
- nausea (upset stomach) and vomiting (throwing up)

- diarrhea (loose, watery stools)
- allergic reactions

### Less common:

- loss of appetite
- lowered platelet count
- seizures
- skin damage or severe reaction at the IV site

## Special Notes

- Tell your nurse right away if you have any stinging or burning at the IV site.
- To help prevent a serious allergic reaction to paclitaxel, you will be given many other medicines before your treatment. Some you will need to take by mouth the night before and the morning of your treatment. Others will be given through the IV just before starting the paclitaxel. It is important to take all medicines as directed.
- Call your doctor or nurse right away if you have any of these signs of an allergic reaction:
  - shortness of breath
  - wheezing
  - rash
  - chest pain
  - dizziness and lightheadedness.

- Some medicines interact with paclitaxel. Please tell your doctor if you are taking ketoconazole (Nizoral®).
- You may have changes in your menstrual cycle or sperm count. Discuss birth control measures with your doctor. You should not get pregnant or father a child while taking this medicine.

## When To Call Your Doctor

You should call your doctor if you have:

- fever, chills or sore throat
- unusual bleeding or bruising
- mouth sores
- swollen face, lips or throat
- trouble breathing
- wheezing
- fast or irregular heartbeat
- nausea, vomiting or diarrhea you cannot control
- rash or hives
- yellowing of your skin or eyes.

Ask your doctor, nurse or pharmacist if you want more complete medicine information or if you have questions.