






 瑪麗醫院 QUEEN MARY HOSPITAL	Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology	Document No	OGGO-0510-03-10-E-(I)
	Subject Side effects and Nursing tips of the chemotherapy – Paclitaxel (Taxol)	Issue Date	Jul 2016
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		Approved by	Gynae-Oncology Team, QMH
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Paclitaxel (Taxol)

Common side effects	Caring tips
Bone marrow suppression especially low white blood cell count	<p>Low white blood cell count will cause infection easily</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If fever develops, patient must seek medical treatment immediately. Chemotherapy must be stopped and delay for a few days until WBC count back to normal • Wash hands frequently • Avoid contact infectious patient (e.g. Cold) • Inform your nurse & doctor if you have fever > 38° C, malaise or any signs of infection
Mild nausea & vomiting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chemotherapy inhibits growth of cancer cells but may affect gastric and brain cells causing nausea & vomiting • This side effect will subside when chemotherapy stops • Doctor will prescribe adequate anti-emetics before chemotherapy • Take anti-emetic half hour before meal can alleviate vomiting • Diet advice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Small & frequent meals can decrease gastric-full symptoms ◦ Don't take large amount of water during or after meal to avoid gastric-full symptoms. Better to take water between meals ◦ Avoid oily, too hot or too cold foods ◦ Eat & chew slowly ◦ Take a rest after meal but avoid lying down immediately after meal. Better to stand up or walk ◦ Avoid non-delicious food • Other methods such as relaxation exercise, hypnosis & acupuncture have certain effect on precipitating vomiting • In severe vomiting, intravenous fluid and electrolyte will be infused to maintain body fluid balance
Decrease appetite 	<p>Small & frequent meals, maintain balanced diet, avoid non-delicious, spicy & oily food. Take more beverage & snack, easily swallowed, digestible & soft food. Try to take sufficient calories & protein to maintain your body weight</p>
Hair loss 	<p>Taxol will cause complete hair loss including eyebrow, & eyelashes. Hair loss caused by chemotherapy will grow up again</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usually, hair will grow 2 to 3 months after chemotherapy completed • Tips for alleviate anxiety caused by hair loss <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ buy hair-wig or cap before early stage of hair loss ◦ understand the reason and level of hair loss ◦ express the feelings towards hair loss ◦ know that hair will grow again and the color and quality may have some change (e.g. hair will become curl or grey) ◦ Avoid using hair-dryer, hair-curler & priming hair which will cause hair loss ◦ Use cap and sun-block to protect your head from sunshine ◦ Keep hair scalp clean after hair completely lost ◦ Cut hair before chemotherapy or use hair-wig, cap or scarf

Remarks : Different patient will have different side effects toward chemotherapy. The response should only be compared with that after previous chemotherapy for each individual. Please inform doctor for this condition on follow-up.

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Joint and muscle pain 	Notify your doctor who may prescribe medication to ease joint pain
Cardiac toxicity 	An electrocardiogram will be performed before your first treatment. Blood pressure & pulse will be monitored during the beginning of the treatment. Notify your nurse or doctor if you have history of heart disease
Limbs paresthesia and numbness 	You may have hand and foot numbness, tingling pain and hotness. These conditions may persist for few years. Doctor may consider prescribe vitamin B6 to alleviate the side effects

Rare side effects	Caring tips
Immediate hypersensitivity reactions 	<p>(During the initial phase of chemotherapy, you may have reaction such as palpitation, shortness of breath, rash, fever, dizziness, low blood pressure & shivering)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the initial half hour of chemotherapy, nurse will closely monitor your blood pressure, pulse, respiration and body temperature • If hypersensitivity reactions occur, chemotherapy will be stopped and treatment will be carried out immediately • Doctor will perform examination & first aid .treatment • Anti-hypersensitive drug will be prescribed
Extravasations and local inflammation	<p>If chemotherapy drug leaks into the tissue area outside the infusion catheter, the surrounding area will become red, swollen and painful on touching, the skin tissue will become necrosis in severe case</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treatment: chemotherapy must be stopped immediately. Antidote, anti-inflammatory medications & adequate nursing care will be applied. Inflammation will usually subside within 1 to 2 weeks • Please notify the nurse if any abnormality occurs during or after chemotherapy

Remarks : Different patient will have different side effects toward chemotherapy. The response should only be compared with that after previous chemotherapy for each individual. Please inform doctor for this condition on follow-up.