



health

Department:  
Health  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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**NOTICE: SUPPLY CONSTRAINTS WITH DOCETAXEL; 20MG/ML; INJECTION; 1ML FOR ONCOLOGY TREATMENT AND INTERIM THERAPEUTIC ALTERNATIVES**

The Tertiary and Quaternary Essential Medicines List (EML) currently recommends the use of a taxanes (paclitaxel or docetaxel) for the management of various cancers including breast, prostate and lung. Refer to Table 1 below for the current approved recommendations.

Table 1: Approved recommendations for taxanes: docetaxel and paclitaxel

MEDICINE	INDICATION	NEMLC OUTCOMES
<b>Taxanes</b>		<b>Approved</b>
Docetaxel, Paclitaxel	Adjuvant breast cancer.	Approved for patients with high grade, node positive ER negative disease.
Paclitaxel	First-line chemotherapy in advanced non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC).	<b>Approved</b>
Paclitaxel	Metastatic cervical carcinoma.	<b>Approved</b>
<b>Taxanes</b>		<b>Approved</b>
Docetaxel, Paclitaxel	Metastatic breast cancer – first- and second line.	
Docetaxel	Squamous cell carcinoma of head and neck.	<b>Approved</b> Approved for patients with good performance status and adequate follow-up used in combination with cisplatin plus 5-fluoro-uracil.
Docetaxel	Second-line therapy for advanced non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC) in selected patients with good performance status (ECOG 0;1).	<b>Approved</b>
Docetaxel	Castrate resistant prostate cancer.	<b>Approved</b> Docetaxel 75mg/m <sup>2</sup> intravenously 3 times weekly plus prednisone 10mg orally, for 6 cycles.
Docetaxel	Patients with hormone sensitive prostate cancer (HSPC).	<b>Approved</b> <b>For patients with high volume disease:</b> defined as the presence of visceral metastases or ≥4 bone lesions with ≥1 beyond the vertebral bodies and pelvis

Docetaxel 20mg/ml, 1ml injection, which is on National Contract from Accord Healthcare (Pty) Ltd, is currently unavailable. The docetaxel 20mg injection, will only be available at the end of April 2025. Docetaxel 80mg injection, paclitaxel 30mg and paclitaxel 100mg injections are all currently available.

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- INTERIM THERAPEUTIC ALTERNATIVES RECOMMENDED BY THE AFFORDABLE MEDICINES DIRECTORATE**

In the interim, while docetaxel 20mg injection is unavailable, docetaxel 80mg injection or paclitaxel (30mg, 100mg) can be considered for use. For new patients for initiation on a taxane regimen for the management of breast or lung cancer, it is advised that paclitaxel be initiated during this period. Note it may be very risky and difficult to switch patients from one taxane to another mid-treatment and should only be considered in extreme circumstances as guided by an oncologist.

**Note:** *there is no data for use of paclitaxel in prostate cancer.*

**Note:** *Any changes in taxane therapy must be done in consultation with a specialist.*

**Procurement information**

NSN	Product Description	Supplier Name	Price
180138165	Paclitaxel; 30mg/5ml; injection; 5 ml	Oethmaan Biosims (Pty) Ltd	R 77.62
180270223	Paclitaxel; 100mg/16.7ml; injection; 16.7 ml	Oethmaan Biosims (Pty) Ltd	R 267.37
180182961	Docetaxel; 80mg/4ml; injection; 4 ml	Accord Healthcare (Pty) Ltd	R183.94

**Communication and dissemination of information**

Provinces and Healthcare Facilities are requested to distribute and communicate this information in consultation with the Pharmaceutical and Therapeutics Committees. Kindly share with all healthcare professionals and relevant stakeholders.

Kind regards,

*K Jamaloodien*

**MS KHADIJA JAMALOODIEN**

**CHIEF DIRECTOR: SECTOR WIDE PROCUREMENT**

**DATE:** 14/3/2025