



Sixth Edition

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# **Clinical Pharmacy Guide:**

## **Cancer Drug Treatment Assessment and Review**

BC Cancer

Division of Pharmacy

Pharmacy Educators

Communities Oncology Network

BRITISH COLUMBIA

[www.bccancer.bc.ca](http://www.bccancer.bc.ca)

Introduction  
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\*Name Changed from Clinical Pharmacy Guide: Chemotherapy Assessment and Review

\*\*OUT OF PRINT: Pharmacy Guide to BC Cancer Chemotherapy Protocols – The Clinical Interpretation and Application of Treatment Protocol Summaries. This manual was originally published in 2003 in a bound format, which is now out of print. Please use this online version.

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# Introduction

The purpose of this guide is to provide recommendations to pharmacists in British Columbia for the clinical assessment and review of cancer drug treatment orders received within their practices. Cancer drug treatment dispensed by BC Cancer Pharmacy involves drugs which inhibit or prevent the proliferation of cancers, including chemotherapy, hormonal therapy, immunotherapy, and targeted therapy. All of the BC Cancer drug treatment protocols are found on the BC Cancer website under the Chemotherapy Protocols section. This applies to both oral and parenteral dosage forms. Oral cancer drug therapies can be as toxic as parenteral cancer drug therapy, therefore, they require the same assessment and review process. It is hoped that pharmacists will use this guide to gain a better understanding of BC Cancer drug treatment protocols and recommendations, thereby, enhancing the quality of pharmaceutical care provided to their patients. Hospitals may need to adapt these guidelines based on the requirements of their patients and institutional policies.

These guidelines are based on regional policies and procedures used by the BC Cancer pharmacies, and the following BC Cancer Systemic Therapy Policies and Procedures

## III-10 Policy Systemic Therapy Delivery Process

This policy outlines the responsibilities of prescribers, pharmacists, and nurses for the safe prescribing, preparation, dispensing and administration of cancer drugs.

## III-40 Policy and Procedure Systemic Therapy Treatments

This policy explains the rationale for the treatment protocols and defines terms used by the Provincial Systemic Therapy Program. The procedure describes the steps required when proposing a new systemic treatment to be funded by BC Cancer

## III-45 Policy Compassionate Access Program

This policy outlines the rules and guiding principles of the BC Cancer Compassionate Access Program (CAP) process that supports access to treatments with restricted funding or for exceptional clinical circumstances.



# Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this guide, the pharmacist should be able to:

- Interpret BC Cancer treatment protocols
- Determine the eligibility of a drug for reimbursement by BC Cancer
- Assess cancer drug treatment orders for suitability
- Interpret laboratory results and adjust doses accordingly
- Select appropriate drug delivery methods for cancer drugs
- Identify the toxicities of cancer drugs and discuss options to prevent and minimize toxicity
- Review a patient's medication profile for possible interactions with cancer drugs
- Define the term "benefit status" and identify benefit and non-benefit supportive care medications

The guide begins by providing a didactic section with pertinent information used by the pharmacist to clinically assess cancer drug treatment orders. The pharmacist may further enhance their knowledge by working through case studies. Hyperlinks are embedded throughout the guide, right-click on them to open them in a new tab or page and maintain your place in the guide.

Note: for drugs with similar names, BC Cancer protocols and pre-printed orders incorporate the risk reduction strategy of TALLman lettering by printing sections of the drug name in capital letters to emphasize differences between the Look-Alike/Sound-Alike drugs. For example, carboplatin is written as CARBOplatin to avoid mix-ups with CISplatin. See BC Cancer Pharmacy Directive [VI-90-01: Use of TALLman Lettering for Medication Nomenclature](#) for more information. For the purposes of this guide, we do not use TALLman lettering.