



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Benefit Drug List - PEG I-asparaginase, IV Clodronate (BRAVCLOD, BRAVPAM)
- Protocol Update - BRAVCLOD, BRAVPAM, GOOVCATX, GOOVTAX3, GUBEP, GUPLHRH, KSEP, UKSLDO, KSVB, LYICE, MYMP
- Cancer Management Manual
- Pre-Printed Order Update - KSAD, LYHDMTX, PUM
- Patient Education - Dexamethasone for nausea: inadvertent dosing, Fatigue pamphlet
- Cancer Drug Manual
- Continuing Education - National Oncology Pharmacy Symposium (NOPS)

FAX request form and IN TOUCH phone list are provided if additional information is needed.

## BENEFIT DRUG LIST

The following new programs have been funded by the Provincial Systemic Therapy Program effective February 1, 2001:

**PEG I-asparaginase** for pediatric leukemia and lymphoma

**Intravenous clodronate** as an alternative to pamidronate for use in breast cancer with bone metastases:

- therapy of bone metastases in patients unable to tolerate oral clodronate (see protocol BRAVCLOD)
- management of acute bone pain (see protocol BRAVPAM).

For therapy of bone metastases (BRAVCLOD), **oral clodronate** remains the first line drug. Intravenous clodronate and pamidronate are no more effective than oral clodronate for this

indication and are reserved for patients who cannot tolerate the oral route. For either BRAVCLOD or BRAVPAM, the choice between the two intravenous bisphosphonates (clodronate or pamidronate) is at the prescriber's discretion. The cost of clodronate is about one-fifth of the cost of pamidronate for an equipotent dose. Note that BCCA only funds bisphosphonates for bone metastases associated with **breast cancer** and does not reimburse for these agents when used for the management of hypercalcemia.

These drugs are now approved as Class II drugs on the benefit list. A Class II form must be completed and submitted to the Provincial Systemic Therapy Program before the drug will be dispensed at a regional cancer centre or reimbursed to a community hospital.

Susan O'Reilly, MB, FRCPC  
Provincial Systemic Program Leader

The current Benefit Drug List is available on the BCCA Communities Oncology Network website <http://bccancer.com>.

## PROTOCOL UPDATE

Protocol codes for treatments requiring "Undesignated Indication" approval prior to use are prefixed with the letter **U**.

- **INDEX to BCCA Protocol Summaries** revised monthly (includes tumour group, protocol code, indication, drugs, last revision date and version)
- **BRAVCLOD** revised (treatment): Therapy of bone metastases in breast cancer using oral clodronate.
- **BRAVPAM** revised (treatment): Treatment of acute bone pain secondary to breast cancer metastases using pamidronate or IV clodronate.

- **GOOVCATX** revised (outpatient restriction removed): Primary treatment of visible residual (extreme risk) invasive epithelial ovarian cancer using paclitaxel and carboplatin.
- **GOOVTAX3** revised (eligibility): Treatment of progressive, platinum-refractory epithelial ovarian carcinoma, primary peritoneal carcinoma or fallopian tube carcinoma using paclitaxel.
- **GUBEP** revised (lab test clarified): Bleomycin, etoposide, cisplatin for nonseminoma germ cell cancers.
- **GUPLHRH** revised (eligibility, treatment updated): Therapy for prostate cancer using LHRH agonist (goserelin, leuprolide or buserelin).
- **KSEP** deleted: Oral etoposide for Kaposi's sarcoma.
- **UKSLDO** revised (eligibility clarified): Therapy of Kaposi's sarcoma using liposomal doxorubicin (Caelyx®). Undesignated indication approval required.
- **KSVB** revised (premedications clarified): Palliative therapy for Kaposi's sarcoma using vinblastine alternating with vincristine.
- **LYICE** revised (eligibility, MESNA): Treatment of lymphoma with ifosfamide, carboplatin and etoposide.
- **MYMP** revised (prednisone dose): Treatment of multiple myeloma using melphalan and prednisone.

Most chemotherapy protocols are available on the BCCA website <http://www.bccancer.bc.ca/ccp/>.

### **CANCER MANAGEMENT MANUAL**

The Cancer Management Manual is available on BCCA website <http://www.bccancer.bc.ca/cmm/>.

### **PRE-PRINTED ORDER UPDATE**

Pre-printed orders should always be checked with the most current BCCA protocol summaries. The Vancouver Cancer Centre has prepared the following chemotherapy pre-printed orders, which can be used as a guide for reference:

- **KSAD** - Palliative therapy for Kaposi's sarcoma using doxorubicin

- **LYHDMTX** - Treatment of leptomeningeal lymphoma or intracerebral lymphoma with high dose methotrexate
- **PUM** - Palliative therapy for metastatic carcinomas using mitomycin

An index to the orders can be obtained by Fax-back.

### **PATIENT EDUCATION**

#### **Dexamethasone for Nausea: Inadvertent Overdose**

As part of their usual dispensing procedures, many retail pharmacists provide printed standard drug information which, for dexamethasone, includes the statement "DO NOT STOP TAKING THIS MEDICINE WITHOUT CHECKING WITH YOUR DOCTOR. STOPPING THIS MEDICINE SUDDENLY MAY CAUSE SERIOUS SIDE EFFECTS". As useful as this warning would be to patients on chronic steroid therapy, it is obviously undesirable when the indication is control of post-chemotherapy nausea.

There have been a number of incidents reported recently of patients who were prescribed dexamethasone as an antiemetic post-chemotherapy (e.g. 4 mg bid x 4 doses) actually taking it for a much longer period of time. Unfortunately, even though the dexamethasone may be ordered and labeled correctly, some patients may continue taking dexamethasone after reading such a dire written warning.

Therefore, it is important that health care professionals in the cancer treatment centres educate patients and caregivers regarding the intended use of the dexamethasone and the importance of limiting its use post-chemotherapy. Patients should also be encouraged to inform their retail pharmacist that they have just had chemotherapy, so that the retail pharmacist is aware that the usual warnings do not apply in that situation.

Marianne Moore, BSc(Pharm)  
Vancouver Cancer Centre

*A patient handout on dexamethasone for nausea can be found in Appendix 3 of the BCCA Cancer Drug Manual on our website.*

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### Fatigue Pamphlet

Patient surveys have indicated that fatigue is a common complaint in cancer patients. The Canadian Association of Nurses in Oncology publication, *Your bank to energy savings: how people with cancer can handle fatigue*, is a source of information for patients. Contact your regional BCCA cancer centre library for more information.

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### CANCER DRUG MANUAL

The Cancer Drug Manual is available on the BCCA website <http://www.bccancer.bc.ca/cdm/>.

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### CONTINUING EDUCATION

#### National Oncology Pharmacy Symposium April 21-22, Montreal

NOPS is the annual educational event organized by the Canadian Association of Pharmacy in Oncology in cooperation with the National Cancer Institute of

Canada Pharmacists' Network. For further information, please fax Lai Schrader at the Cross Cancer Institute 780-432-8886.

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Cancer Centre for the Southern Interior (CCSI)	(250) 712-3900	Toll-Free 1-(888)-563-7773
Fraser Valley Cancer Centre (FVCC)	(604)-930-2098	Toll-Free 1-(800)-523-2885
Vancouver Cancer Centre (VCC)	(604)-877-6000	Toll-Free 1-(800)-663-3333
Vancouver Island Cancer Centre (VICC)	(250) 370-8228	Toll-Free 1-(800)-670-3322

## BCCA SYSTEMIC THERAPY UPDATE FAX REQUEST FORM

FAX (604) 877-0585

bulletin@bccancer.bc.ca

TO SUBSCRIBE: FAX OR EMAIL YOUR REQUEST OR CALL @ 877-6098 LOCAL 2247

**FOR URGENT REQUESTS PLEASE CALL (604) 877-6098 LOCAL 2247**

**OR TOLL-FREE IN BC 1-800-663-3333 LOCAL 2247**

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E-mail (Word 6.0)

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**UPDATES** Please  Fax-Back information below:

<input type="checkbox"/> All items	
Pre-Printed Orders:	
<input type="checkbox"/> KSAD	<input type="checkbox"/> PUM
<input type="checkbox"/> LYHDMTX	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Index: Pre-Printed Orders	
Protocol Summaries:	
<input type="checkbox"/> BRAVCLOD	<input type="checkbox"/> KSEP
<input type="checkbox"/> BRAVPAM	<input type="checkbox"/> UKSLDO
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOVCATX	<input type="checkbox"/> KSVB
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOV TAX3	<input type="checkbox"/> LYICE
<input type="checkbox"/> GUBEP	<input type="checkbox"/> MYMP
<input type="checkbox"/> GUPLHRH	
<input type="checkbox"/> Index: Protocol Summaries (current month)	
Reimbursement	
<input type="checkbox"/> Benefit Drug List (01 February 2001)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Class 2 Form (01 February 2001)	
Systemic Therapy Update Index	
<input type="checkbox"/> Jan-Jun 2000	

## REGIONAL CANCER CENTRE ACCESS

BULLETIN UPDATES	LOCATION
Pre-Printed Orders	H:\everyone\systemic\chemo\Orders\VCC
Index of Pre-Printed Orders	Index
	KSAD
	LYHDMTX
	PUM
Protocol Summaries	H:\everyone\systemic\chemo\Protocol\'tumour site\'
	BRAVCLOD KSEP
	BRAVPAM UKSLDO
	GOOVCATX KSVB
	GOOVTAX3 LYICE
	GUBEP MYMP
	GUPLHRH
Index of Protocol Summaries	Index_NT or Index_W6
Reimbursement	H:\everyone\systemic\chemo\Reimburs
Benefit Drug List (01 Feb 2001)	BenefitList
Class 2 Form (01 Feb 2001)	Class2

For easy access, double-click your systemic chemo icon.

We appreciate your comments. Write us at [bulletin@bccancer.bc.ca](mailto:bulletin@bccancer.bc.ca)