



cancer care
ontario
erie st. clair regional
cancer program

action cancer
ontario

programme régional
de cancérologie d'érié st-clair

Dear Patient,

On Wednesday, March 27, 2013, we were made aware of a recently detected medication error by a company that supplies one of our chemotherapy medications, cyclophosphamide. Over the past year, there was an error in the preparation of the product by this company leading to a lower concentration, which ultimately resulted in patients receiving a lower dose of this specific medication than was prescribed. The medication was immediately removed from further use and is now being prepared internally.

This error has affected patients in Windsor, London and Oshawa, Ontario. We are working with Cancer Care Ontario and all the Cancer Centres in those regions on addressing this issue.

What could this mean to the effectiveness of your treatment?

Your oncologist has provided you with treatment that has minimized your risk of cancer recurrence or its progression based on current clinical evidence. However, there are many factors, some known and some still unknown, that determine a patient's outcome with cancer. Although this error resulted in a slightly reduced dose of one of the chemotherapy medications in your treatment, the probability of this single factor alone having a serious effect is very small. However, it will be impossible to determine if this error is without any risk. Importantly, many patients receive intended dose adjustments of their chemotherapy for various reasons and continue to remain cancer free and enjoy good health. In addition, many patients receiving chemotherapy as a preventative (or what is called adjuvant treatment), after surgical removal of their cancer could ultimately be cured without the use of chemotherapy all together, but we need to advise treatment because of the remaining uncertainty of who will be at risk of recurrence and those who will not. Considering these factors it is important to keep this error, as important as it is, in appropriate perspective.

What is Cyclophosphamide?

Cyclophosphamide is one of the medications used in the treatment of breast cancer and lymphoma. Although combined with other medications, it is not considered to be the most important part of the treatment. We combine cyclophosphamide with other medications to increase the effectiveness of these medications. These other medications (Adriamycin, Taxotere or Taxol for breast cancer; Adriamycin and prednisone for lymphomas) are the more important medications in treating your cancer, and you received the appropriate

dose of these more important medications. We want to assure you that it is not likely that any individual patient will have a different outcome because of this error.

While we are relieved that it was not one of the more important medications that was affected, we still are upset that this company made the error that occurred. We have cancelled all further orders from this manufacturer for this product. In the short term we have reverted to preparing the medication in-house as we make arrangements for another supplier to provide the medication.

This is the only medication that we receive from outside the Cancer Centre that is pre-mixed in this manner. The other medications are mixed in our own pharmacy, and go through multiple internal quality assurance checks before they are administered to the patient.

What do I do next?

You will be receiving a call from the Cancer Centre staff within the next few days and offered the opportunity to schedule an appointment with an Oncologist to discuss any concerns that you may have with respect to this issue; or

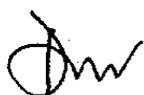
You may also wish to wait until your next scheduled appointment with your own Oncologist; or

We have also established a dedicated phone line for you to call with questions 519-255-8698 and speak to a Cancer Center team member. If you call and are asked to leave a message please do so with your full name and return phone number. We are committed to returning your phone message within 24 hours.

We sincerely regret that this error has occurred and want to provide you every assurance that all steps are in place to ensure that such errors do not occur in the future.

We are sending this letter to the last known address of the patient that received cyclophosphamide from this manufacturer at our Cancer Center. If you received this letter in error please call the number above and inform us and then disregard the letter.

Sincerely,



David Musyj
President & CEO



Claudia den Boer Grima
Regional VP, Cancer Services Chief,



Dr. Kenneth M. Schneider
Department of Oncology