

ADRIAMYCIN® (Doxorubicin hydrochloride for injection)

Bedford Laboratories, the major supplier of doxorubicin, put all inventory distribution on hold in July 2012, pending a manufacturing-related investigation. There is no estimate of a release date.¹

Teva and Hospira supply doxorubicin in Canadian markets. Teva has the drug on suspended back-order due to unspecified manufacturing issues with no estimated release date.²

Hospira now has supply as of August 23rd, 2012, and is accepting orders.³

However, until more supply is guaranteed, it may be prudent to follow basic drug shortage guidelines:

- Existing doxorubicin stock only used to continue treatments that have already been initiated.
- No new patients should be initiated on doxorubicin treatment, until further notice.

Indications⁵

- Doxorubicin hydrochloride has been used successfully both as a single agent and also in combination with other approved cancer chemotherapeutic agents to produce regression in neoplastic conditions such as acute lymphoblastic leukemia, acute myeloblastic leukemia, Wilms' tumor, neuroblastomas, soft tissue sarcomas, bone sarcomas, breast carcinoma, gynecologic carcinomas, testicular carcinomas, bronchogenic carcinoma, Hodgkin's disease, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, thyroid carcinoma, bladder carcinomas, squamous cell carcinoma of the head and neck, and gastric carcinoma.
- Doxorubicin has also been used by instillation into the bladder for the topical treatment of superficial bladder tumors.

Treatment Alternatives^{1,4}:

- No single agent can be substituted for Doxorubicin
- An alternate agent based on a patient's renal and liver function, and the neoplasm type and location must be chosen
- A hematology or oncology specialist consult may be appropriate
- Non-anthracycline anticancer medicines may be considered as an alternative treatment.

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References:

1. American Society of Health-System Pharmacists. Drug Shortages. Available at <http://www.ashp.org/drugshortages/current/bulletin.aspx?id=680>. August 2012.
2. Personal communication, Teva Canada Medical Information, August 2012 – 1-800-268-41293.
3. Personal communication, Hospira Pharmaceuticals, August 2012, 1-866-488-6088 ext 2564
4. European Medicines Agency. Shortage of Caelyx (doxorubicin hydrochloride). Available at http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Medicine_QA/2011/09/WC500111745.pdf. Accessed July 2012.
5. e-CPS [online]. Adriamycin monograph. Accessed August 22nd, 2012.