

## Prefilled Fluorouracil Infusors

**It is time consuming to prepare the required doses of fluorouracil (5FU) infusors just before administration to patient. Certain doses of fluorouracil infusors can be purchased premixed. Which doses are these? What expiry do they have? Does BC Cancer reimburse them in full?**

Fluorouracil infusors can be very time consuming to prepare on a daily basis, especially when treating several patients per day. BC Cancer has implemented dose banding for fluorouracil in gastrointestinal protocols requiring infusion over **46 hours**. This allows for a standardized dose to be administered for a range of doses in a specific dose band. It is therefore possible to have premixed infusors with a standardized dose on hand for use in patients who will receive these protocols. For more information on dose banding, please see the [Dose Banding Pharmacy FAQ](#) in this section.

A number of commercially prepared prefilled fluorouracil infusion devices are available for purchase. BC Cancer purchases prefilled Baxter Infusors™ (from here onwards referred to as Infusors) in doses of: 3200 mg, 3600 mg, 4000 mg, 4400 mg, 4800 mg, 5250 mg. These are used for fluorouracil doses ranging from 3000 to 5500 mg. Doses outside of this range will have to be prepared individually as the exact calculated dose.



## **Pharmacy Considerations:**

### **Expiry dates**

Baxter fluorouracil Infusors have an expiry of 8 weeks, whereas those prepared within the pharmacy have an expiry of 8 days; both are stored at room temperature. When selecting a prefilled Infusor it is important to ensure that the 46-hour infusion duration is taken into account, so the infusor does not expire prior to the end of the infusion period.

### **Look-alike labelling**

All commercially prepared Baxter fluorouracil Infusors have look-alike labelling, which increases the risk of selecting an Infusor with the incorrect dose. In order to decrease this risk, a number of safeguards can be implemented:

- Store each dose of Infusor in separate bins
- Use different coloured bins for different doses
- Label the outside of the bins with the dose of the infusor

To prevent selection bias errors, the person picking the prefilled Infusor should be different from the person completing the final product check.

### **Pharmacy label on fluorouracil Infusor**

The dispensing pharmacy medication label should be affixed to the Infusor bottle in such a way as to allow the manufacturer information (dose, expiry date, etc) to remain visible. Placing the label to the side of the Infusor will allow the patient, as well as the nurse attaching and disconnecting the device, to read the manufacturer information. Additionally, the pharmacy label should not cover the markings (on the back of the device) that are used to visualize the change in size of the elastomeric bubble inside the bottle. The size helps confirm if the infusion has been completed within the specified time period.

### **Bubbles within the infusor balloon**

On occasion, bubbles may be present in the prefilled infusor. According to the manufacturer Baxter, the presence of “large pea-sized bubbles” in the reservoir is normal and the bubbles will not migrate to the administration tube set. This is because the reservoir outlet is located in the center of the solution, while gravity will force the air bubbles to remain on the surface of the reservoir material. The air should dissipate after several hours since the reservoir material is permeable to gas, and eventually no air bubbles will remain in the reservoir.

## **Drug Coverage/Reimbursement**

For the CON sites, only the cost of the drugs dispensed and administered to patients is reimbursed by BC Cancer. The cost of any devices, equipment, etc. required to deliver a medication is NOT reimbursed. In order to avoid wastage due to unused or expired prefilled fluorouracil Infusors, it is important to ensure that the doses and quantities purchased align with the anticipated patient orders.

*Revised: March 30, 2023*