

# ETHANOL CONTENT IN CHEMOTHERAPY

Moreno-García M., Gil-Martín A., Díez-Fernández R., Molina-García T.  
Hospital Universitario de Getafe, Madrid, Spain

## BACKGROUND

❖ Ethanol is used as an excipient to enhance the solubility of substances partially soluble in water.

**A unit of alcohol:** 10ml ó 8g

Amount of ethanol that a healthy adult can metabolize in 1 hour.



### For our study we use:

- Gemcitabine (Actavis® 2,000mg/50ml): **9.875mg ethanol/mg drug.**
- Paclitaxel (Gp-pharm® 300mg/50ml): **65.83mg ethanol/mg drug.**



Spanish Pharmaceutical Association

&

European Commission

>3g/dose

- Affects ability to drive and use machines
- Interferes with other drugs
- Be careful with alcoholics, pregnant or breast-feeding women, children or patients with liver disease or epilepsy

Pharmacy Department evaluates a new IV drug

concentrate for solution for infusion vials

**BETTER**

lyophilized powder vials

- More convenient.
- Easier to handle
- Decrease errors.

## OBJETIVES

To describe the amount of ethanol given to oncology patients on gemcitabine (GMZ) and paclitaxel (PTX) on each administration.

## METHODS

Retrospective study of 6 months  
(03/2012-09/2012)

INCLUDING

Patients who had received gemcitabine or paclitaxel

Data collection was made through the electronic prescription

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Drug	Patients	N administrations	Dose (mg)	g ethanol/dose
Gemcitabine	69	6.4	1553.8 (700-2300)	15.34 (6.91-22.71)
Paclitaxel	63	6.02	149.78 (72-438)	9.86 (4.74-28.83)



## CONCLUSIONS

- Ethanol given to these patients may be compared to moderate alcohol consumption.
- We have to pay special attention because ethanol is infused directly into the vein in a short time.
- We have to be cautious with alcoholic people, liver disease, epilepsy and polymedicated patients.
- Patients should be advised about toxic effects of ethanol. They should also be warned not to drive after chemotherapy

**Conflict of interest: Nothing to disclose**

Email: [mmgarcia@salud.madrid.org](mailto:mmgarcia@salud.madrid.org)

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