

Doctor's anger as cancer drug denied on NHS



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Friday, May 11, 2012

A NOTTINGHAM oncologist has criticised a decision not to allow a life-extending prostate cancer drug to be prescribed free on the NHS.

Cabazitaxel, which is marketed as Jevtana, can extend the life of some patients by about three months.

But the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (Nice), which decides which drugs should be offered on the NHS, has rejected it, to the anger of Dr Santhanam Sundar.

It means prostate cancer sufferers will have to apply to East Midlands Strategic Health Authority to be treated as a special case if they want to use the drug.

Cabazitaxel is often used with another drug called prednisone but the health authority has said only one drug or the other will be given to patients - not both.

It is one of only three strategic health authorities in the country to take this stance. Had Nice decided to endorse the drug, it would have been administered to all as a matter of course.

Dr Sundar, a consultant oncologist at Nottingham City Hospital, said: "I think this is a bad decision. It means patients in Notts suffering from prostate cancer will not have the same range of drugs available as a patient living in London. It's a postcode lottery."



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