



Pharmacy Practice Newsletter

"Know what's new... Optimize care"

Introduction

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The Central Administration of Pharmaceutical Care within the Egyptian Drug Authority is keenly interested in upgrading the pharmaceutical services provided to patients and enhancing the pharmacotherapy-related knowledge of all healthcare providers, which will positively impact patients' health and safety.

From this point, **the General Administration of Drug Utilization and Pharmacy Practice (DU&PP)** is pleased to publish the *Pharmacy Practice Newsletters*, which aims to aid practitioners in their mission to optimize care. Topics related to pharmacotherapy and pharmacy practice will be addressed in our newsletter. The newsletter will provide an up-to-date, concise summary that fits perfectly into the healthcare provider's tight schedule.

We utilize accredited resources and indexed journals, integrating the best available research into clinical care, to support the decision-making process for healthcare professionals. To optimize patients' treatment plans and ensure their safety and efficacy, clinicians must closely follow the literature for any updates related to their practice, given the dynamic nature of clinical research.

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EDA Publications: Role of Oncology Pharmacist in Radiotherapy

The Oncology Pharmacy Team within the Drug Utilization and Pharmacy Practice Administration has issued the fourth guide of the *Egyptian Guide for Oncology Pharmacy Practice*, with the title: '*Role of Oncology Pharmacist in Radiotherapy*'

Aim of the guide

This chapter offers a detailed guide for clinical pharmacists working in oncology facilities that provide radiotherapy services. Its primary focus is to emphasize the crucial role of clinical pharmacists in caring for patients undergoing radiation treatments.

Introduction

Radiation therapy has transformed cancer care since its inception in the late 19th century, emerging as a critical treatment modality alongside surgery and chemotherapy. The primary goals of radiotherapy are to eradicate malignant cells, reduce tumor burden, and prevent disease recurrence while preserving surrounding healthy tissue. Despite technological advancements improving precision, radiation exposure inevitably affects normal cells, leading to a spectrum of acute and chronic toxicities that necessitate proactive management.

Radiation-induced cellular damage primarily occurs through DNA disruption, resulting in both immediate and delayed complications. Clinically, the most prevalent toxicities are radiation dermatitis, oral mucositis, and cancer-related fatigue, though side effects vary significantly based on treatment site. Common acute effects include gastrointestinal distress (diarrhea, nausea/vomiting), alopecia, xerostomia, and skin reactions, while late-term consequences may involve osteoporosis, cardiovascular complications, endocrine dysfunction, cognitive changes, and secondary malignancies.

Pharmacists play a key role in managing side effects through medication optimization (e.g., antiemetics, analgesics, barrier creams) and patient education on symptom control. They also monitor for radiation recall reactions and lymphedema, while supporting mental health (e.g., post-traumatic stress). By collaborating with oncologists, pharmacists enhance therapeutic outcomes and quality of life throughout radiotherapy.

Content of the guide

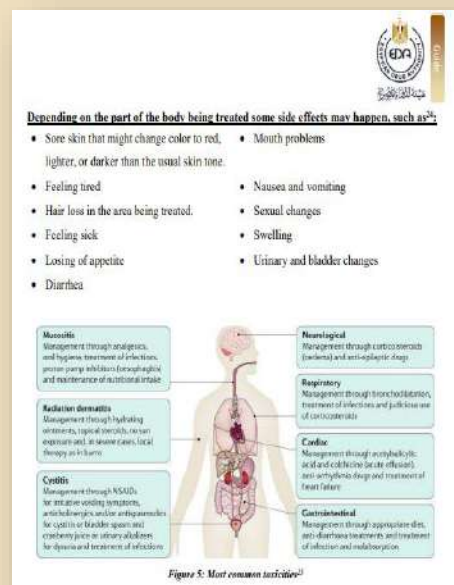
This guide serves as a comprehensive manual for pharmacists practicing in oncology settings with radiotherapy services. It highlights the essential responsibilities of oncology pharmacists in optimizing care for patients undergoing radiation treatment in order to ensure therapeutic efficacy while maintaining patients' safety.

It includes the evolution and principles of radiotherapy, its integration with other cancer therapies (surgery, chemotherapy, immunotherapy), and common radiation-induced toxicities, categorized by affected anatomical sites. Furthermore, it includes evidence-based management strategies for acute and late-term side effects and the clinical pharmacist's role in patient education, toxicity prevention, early detection, and longitudinal monitoring to improve safety and outcomes.

Where to find the guide



The '*Role of Oncology Pharmacist in Radiotherapy*' chapter is published on the EDA official website and can be accessed via this [LINK](#) or the QR Code.



Patient Education Tips

Radiotherapy Side Effects – What the Patient Should Know

Introduction

- There are several patient education tips to help mitigate the complications of radiotherapy. Within this section, we provide a brief overview of the education tips for the most common radiotherapy side effects, including diarrhea, hair loss, mouth and throat complications, nausea and vomiting, and skin changes.

Patient education tips to reduce complications from diarrhea

Pharmacists should educate patients about the following items:

- Drinking plenty of fluids, 8 to 12 cups each day
- Eating small meals that are easy on the stomach
- Eating low-fiber foods
- Eating food that is high in salts, such as sodium and potassium
- Keeping the anal area clean and dry
- Avoiding food or drink that can make diarrhea worse



Patient education tips to reduce complications from fatigue

Pharmacists should educate patients about the following items:

- Sleeping at least eight hours each night
- Planning time to rest and not to do too much work
- Exercising, relaxing, eating, and drinking well
- Asking for help when needed



Patient education tips to manage before and after hair loss

Pharmacists should educate patients about the following items:

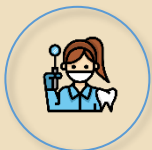
- Washing their hair gently, preferably using a baby shampoo
- Using a hairbrush with soft bristles or a wide-tooth comb. This will aid in minimizing hair breakage and damage. If the patient plans to buy a wig, they are advised to do so while they still have hair.
- Planning and deciding whether to cut hair or shave the head, as it allows the patient to feel more in control of hair loss.
- Protecting and caring for the scalp by using sunscreen or wearing a hat when going outside
- Avoiding hair styling tools such as straightening or curling irons, brush rollers or curlers, and electric hair dryers, as well as hair dyes and hairsprays. These items are known to have detrimental effects on the scalp and hair, which can lead to hair damage and, in some cases, hair loss. Therefore, it is crucial to exercise caution when selecting hair care products and tools to avoid such occurrences.



Patient education tips to reduce mouth and throat complications

Pharmacists should educate patients about the following items:

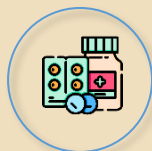
- Visiting a dentist several weeks before beginning treatment
- Examining the mouth daily (patients should be educated by their dentist to do this themselves)
- The tongue, gums, and teeth should all be clean and moist
- Choosing foods that are easy to chew and swallow
- Avoiding anything that could irritate, burn, or scrape the mouth, such as sharp, crunchy foods, hot foods, spicy foods, fruits, juices that are high in acid, and all tobacco products.
- Exercising jaw muscles



Patient education tips to reduce nausea and vomiting

Pharmacists should educate patients about the following items:

- Taking the prescribed anti-nausea medicine appropriately
- Preventing nausea by eating and drinking bland (foods that are soft and low in fiber), easy-to-digest food and drinks that do not upset the stomach
- Scheduling meals and drinks (before or after the radiotherapy)
- Eating small meals and snacks
- Having food and drink that are at room temperature (not too hot and not too cold)
- Drinking plenty of water and fluids



Patient education tips to reduce mild skin and nail changes during radiotherapy

Pharmacists should educate patients about the following items:

- Avoiding talcum powder because it can contain tiny metal particles that can make the soreness worse after radiotherapy
- Not to rub the treated area too hard because this makes it sore
- Not to use perfume on the treated area as this can irritate the skin
- Washing the skin gently with soap and water and gently pat dry
- Avoiding shaving during inflammation periods and not to use heat and cooling pads/ice, or wax and creams for hair removal in the treatment area
- Protecting the hands and nails by wearing gloves when washing the dishes, or cleaning the house, for example
- Using sunscreen and sun-protective lip balm
- Trying to keep the area (areas where the skin folds) clean and dry so it does not become infected



DU&PP News

Pharmaceutical Care Initiatives

In this issue of the Pharmacy Practice Newsletter, we spotlight the pharmaceutical care initiatives carried out between June and August 2025. During this period, the Drug Utilization and Pharmacy Practice Administration team continued its commitment to advancing drug awareness and pharmacy training programs through targeted sessions for the public, community pharmacists, and hospital pharmacists. These initiatives included...

1) EDA Experience Exchange Hub (*Triple E's Hub*)

The goal of **Triple E's Hub** is to reinforce national efforts toward a comprehensive approach for promoting and sharing best pharmaceutical practices across health institutions in Egypt. This is guided by the EDA vision and aligned with Egypt Vision 2030, with a strong focus on building and revitalizing partnerships for sustainable development.

The scientific meetings, held in **June and August 2025**, engaged hospital and clinical pharmacists in showcasing their contributions to patient care. The June session focused on clinical pharmacy interventions in **Acute Coronary Syndrome**, featuring educational case studies aimed at improving patient outcomes. The August session highlighted broader **Pharmacy Practice Contributions** that support better health outcomes. These meetings are part of the EDA's commitment to advancing and sustaining pharmaceutical practices and services, while promoting the optimal and rational use of medications.

The **Triple E's Hub** strategy emphasizes the importance of exchanging experiences in pharmaceutical practice by engaging health institutions from various affiliations and governorates, both governmental and private. Participants take part in regular scientific meetings where they present educational case studies and clinical interventions recommended by clinical pharmacists in both communicable and non-communicable diseases, along with presenting pharmacy practice contributions that enhance patient outcomes. These meetings also foster meaningful discussions among pharmacists, academic staff, and experts from leading health institutions across Egypt.



DU&PP News: Pharmaceutical Care Initiatives

2) (Safe Medication.....Save Life) Initiative

The initiative aims to raise awareness across different segments of society about the safe and effective use of medications, following the **Society Engagement Approach**. Its purpose is to build healthier, more informed communities and ensure maximum therapeutic benefits. The sessions cover a wide range of topics related to non-communicable diseases—such as diabetes, hypertension, chest diseases, proper use of inhalers, safe use of analgesics, and the side effects of cancer medications—in addition to promoting the rational use of antimicrobials.

The on-site awareness campaigns are scheduled to target public places, such as cultural centers and palaces, public libraries, sports clubs, outpatient clinics in hospitals, community service centers in universities, or other public places in the Egyptian governorates.

Community awareness sessions, held at venues such as Nasr City Sporting Club, Giza Culture Palace, Al Shams Sporting Club, and Aviation Sporting Clubs in El Nozha and New Cairo, engaged diverse audiences including adults, women, and children. These sessions fostered fruitful discussions and form part of the EDA's ongoing efforts to enhance drug awareness, strengthen pharmaceutical services across Egypt, and promote the optimal and rational use of medications.



DU&PP News: Pharmaceutical Care Initiatives

3) (*Unlock the Pharmacist Potential*) Initiative

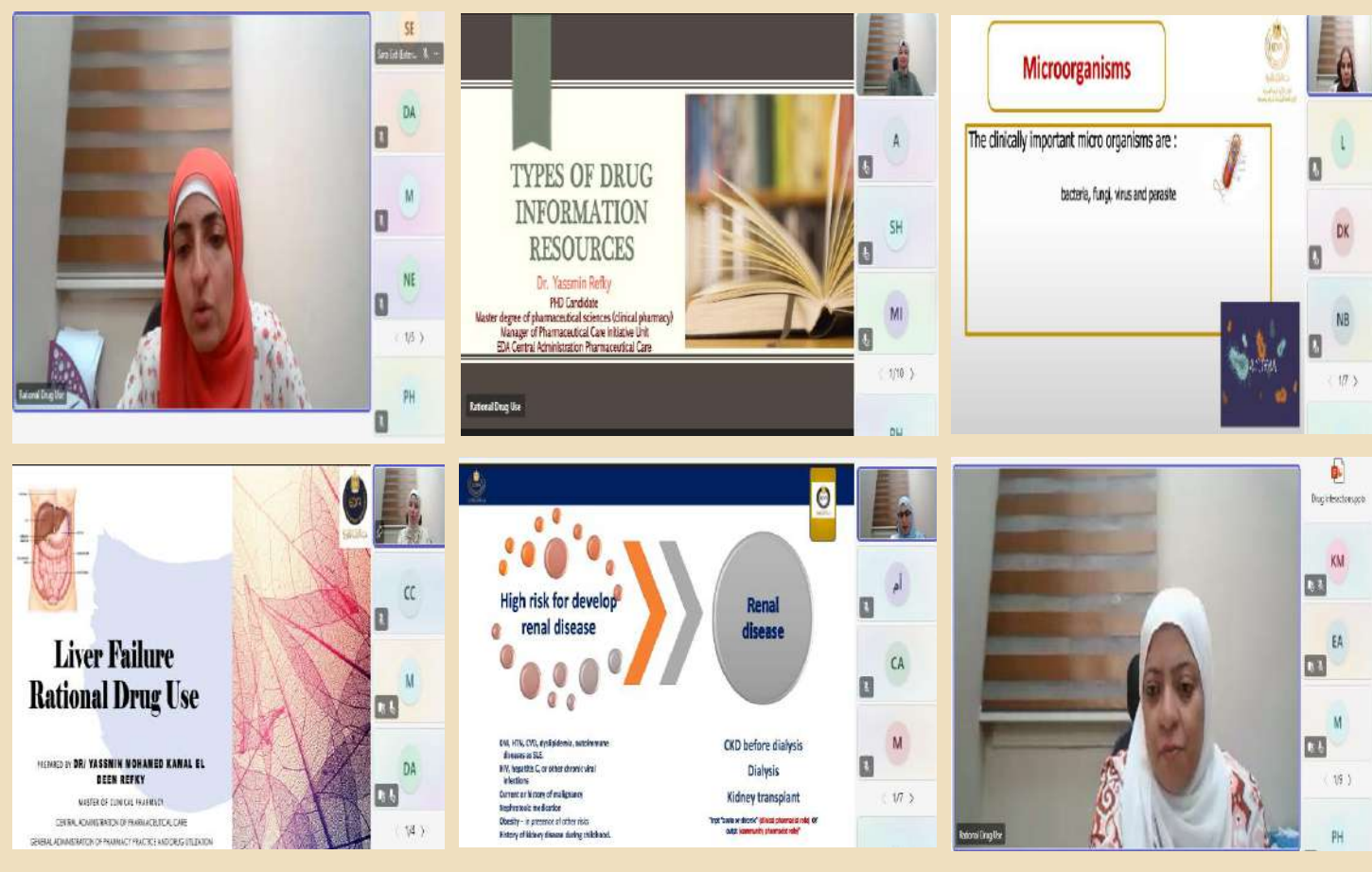
The initiative is designed to promote and sustain effective pharmaceutical practices while fostering continuous professional development. Launched in alignment with the EDA vision and its strategies for capacity building and ongoing growth, it reflects Egypt's broader commitment to advancing healthcare.

The program places a special focus on **community pharmacists**, who serve as the first line of defense in public health and play a pivotal role in enhancing medication safety and accessibility. Training is delivered through a series of monthly **online webinars** organized by the General Administration of Drug Utilization and Pharmacy Practice, often enriched with insights from professional experts and academic professors across diverse fields.

The selected topics include:

- Rational drug use for hepatic impairment patients
- Management of drug interactions
- Rational drug use for chronic coronary syndrome patients
- Rational drug use for renal impairment patients
- Rational drug use of antimicrobials in pediatrics
- Drug information resources

This comprehensive approach ensures participants receive up-to-date knowledge and best practices in the field.

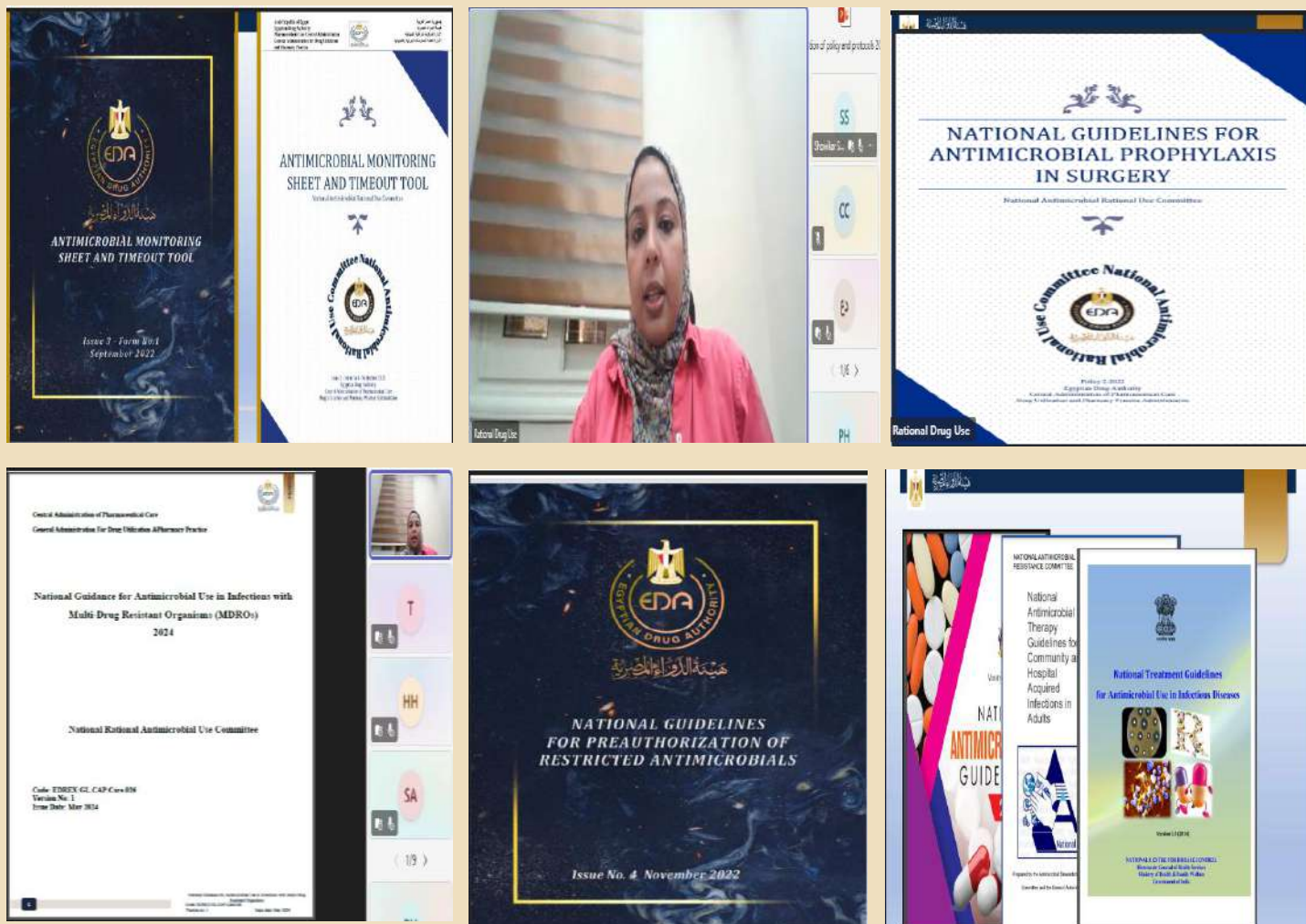


DU&PP News: Guide to Guide Approach

The **Guide-to-Guide** approach is designed to raise awareness among hospital and community pharmacists about the guides issued by the General Administration of Drug Utilization and Pharmacy Practice at the EDA. Developed based on scientific evidence and international guidelines, these resources aim to strengthen pharmaceutical practice, enhance the quality of healthcare services, and ensure patient safety.

As part of this initiative, the **Rational Drug Use team** organized a virtual lecture on 13 July 2025 to deliver a collective briefing on the **previously published EDA National Guides for Rational Antimicrobial Use**. These guides serve as a comprehensive reference to support pharmacists in applying evidence-based practices in antimicrobial stewardship, thereby ensuring the safer and more effective use of these essential medicines.

All EDA guides undergo a rigorous scientific review process led by expert committees, which bring together distinguished faculty members from pharmacy and medicine as well as frontline healthcare practitioners. This collaborative effort ensures the guides are clinically relevant, scientifically sound, and aligned with the latest research



About DU&PP

The Drug Utilization and Pharmacy and Pharmacy Practice General Administration (DU&PP) is concerned with rationalizing medication use and reducing medication errors. The General Administration is also concerned with developing pharmaceutical practices, enhancing Egyptian pharmacists' skills, issuing pharmacy practice guidance, preparing national drug lists and the Egyptian drug formulary, and providing numerous training programs. It also aims to raise community awareness and promote the safe and effective use of medications by conducting awareness campaigns and pharmaceutical care initiatives among all segments of society to ensure patient safety and achieve optimal drug use.

Our publications, including clinical practice guides, newsletters and the Egyptian National Formulary, are available at the official EDA website and can be accessed via the following hyperlinks or QR codes:

Newsletters



SCAN ME

Guides



SCAN ME

Formulary



SCAN ME

Reference

Egyptian Guide for Oncology Pharmacy Practice: Role of Oncology Pharmacist in Radiotherapy.
<https://www.edaegypt.gov.eg/media/4hxlenou/guide-line-radiotherapy.pdf>

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