FDA OKs Ixempra for advanced breast cancer

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The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has approved Ixempra, a new anti-cancer treatment, for use in patients with metastatic or advanced breast cancer.

"This approval is important because it provides certain patients with a new chemotherapy option in instances where other drugs have failed," said Dr. Douglas Throckmorton, deputy director of the FDA's Center for Drug Evaluation and Research.

Ixempra (ixabepilone) was approved for use in combination with another cancer drug, capecitabine, in patients who no longer respond to two other chemotherapy treatments. The prior treatments included an anthracycline (such as doxorubicin or epirubicin) and a taxane (such as paclitaxel or docetaxel).

Ixempra, which is administered by intravenous infusion, was also approved for use alone in patients who no longer benefit from an anthracycline, a taxane and capecitabine.

The drug is distributed by the Bristol-Meyers Squibb Co. of Princeton, N.J.

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