



# NEBRASKA CANCER SPECIALISTS

*the Physicians of Oncology Hematology West*

## **Aranesp®**

**Generic name:** Darbepoetin alfa

### **Drug type:**

Aranesp is a biologic response modifier. It is an erythropoiesis stimulating protein.

### **How Aranesp is given:**

- Aranesp may be given by subcutaneous (layer of tissue between the skin and the muscle) injection into the arm, abdomen or thigh.

### **Aranesp side effects:**

Important things to remember about Aranesp side effects:

- Most people do not experience all of the Aranesp side effects listed.
- Aranesp side effects are almost always reversible and will usually go away after treatment is complete.
- There are many options to help minimize or prevent Aranesp side effects.

### **The following side effects are common for patients receiving Aranesp:**

- Fatigue

### **These are less common side effects of patients receiving Aranesp:**

- Edema (swelling, usually in the feet or hands)
- Fever
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Diarrhea
- Constipation
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Joint pain
- Shortness of breath

Uncommon but significant Aranesp side effects may include problems with blood clots. Blood clots rarely can lead to pulmonary embolus or stroke - potentially life-threatening conditions.

## **When to contact your doctor or health care provider:**

Contact your health care provider ***immediately***, day or night, if you should experience any of the following symptoms:

- Tremors or seizures
- Difficulty breathing
- Chest pain

The following symptoms require medical attention, but are not an emergency. Contact your health care provider ***within 24 hours*** of noticing any of the following:

- Nausea (interferes with ability to eat and unrelieved with prescribed medication)
- Vomiting (vomiting more than 4-5 times in a 24 hour period)
- Diarrhea (4-6 episodes in a 24-hour period)
- Swelling of face, hands, feet, arms or legs
- Extreme fatigue (unable to carry on self-care activities)
- Swelling, redness and/or pain in one leg or arm and not the other

**Always inform your health care provider if you experience any unusual symptoms.**