



# NEBRASKA CANCER SPECIALISTS

*the Physicians of Oncology Hematology West*

## **Avastin ®**

**Generic name:** Bevacizumab

**Drug type:** Avastin is classified as a monoclonal antibody and anti-angiogenesis drug.

### **How Avastin is given:**

- Avastin is given through an infusion into a vein (intravenous, IV)

### **Side effects of Avastin:**

Important things to remember about the side effects of Avastin:

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

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

- Generalized Weakness
- Pain
- Abdominal pain
- Nausea & vomiting
- Poor appetite
- Constipation
- Upper respiratory infection
- Low white blood cell count
- Protein in the urine
- Nose bleed
- Diarrhea
- Hair loss/thinning
- Mouth sores
- Headache

### **These are less common side effects for patients receiving Avastin:**

- Shortness of breath
- Dizziness
- High blood pressure
- Weight loss
- Muscle aches and pains

**These are rare but serious complications of Avastin therapy.**

- Gastrointestinal perforation/ wound healing complications
- Hemorrhage (severe bleeding)
- Hypertensive crisis (severe high blood pressure)
- Nephrotic Syndrome - a condition marked by very high levels of protein in the urine (proteinuria), low levels of protein in the blood, swelling, especially around the eyes, feet and hands

**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:

- Fever of 101° F or higher, chills (possible signs of infection)
- Severe bleeding
- Shortness of breath, difficulty breathing

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:

- Swelling of the feet or ankles or sudden weight gain
- Abdominal pain
- 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)
- Constipation unrelieved by laxative use
- Coughing up blood
- Black or tarry stool or blood in your stools
- Blood in the urine
- Mouth sores (painful redness, swelling or ulcers)
- Swelling, redness and/or pain in one leg or arm and not the other
- Signs of infection such as redness or swelling, pain on swallowing, coughing up mucous, or painful urination
- Unable to eat or drink for 24 hours or have signs of dehydration: tiredness, thirst, dry mouth, dark and decreased amount of urine, or dizziness

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