



# NEBRASKA CANCER SPECIALISTS

*the Physicians of Oncology Hematology West*

## **Herceptin®**

**Generic name:** Trastuzumab

**Drug type:** Herceptin is a monoclonal antibody.

### **How this drug is given:**

- Trastuzumab is given through an infusion into vein (intravenous, IV).

### **Side effects:**

Important things to remember about the side effects of trastuzumab:

- 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 trastuzumab:**

- During the first infusion of this trastuzumab, you may develop chills or a fever. Your health care provider might prescribe medicine to prevent or treat these symptoms.
- Body pain
- Weakness
- Nausea

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

- Headache
- Diarrhea
- Abdominal pain
- Back pain
- Infection
- Flu-like symptoms
- Vomiting
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Rhinitis or pharyngitis
- Insomnia
- Rash
- Dizziness
- Swelling (usually of the feet, ankles or hands)

Infrequently, serious hypersensitivity reactions (anaphylaxis) (see allergic reactions), have been associated with trastuzumab. Most of these events occur within 24 hours of infusion.

A serious but uncommon side effect of trastuzumab can be interference with the pumping action of the heart. The incidence of heart problems increase in people with heart disease or other risk factors, such as radiation to the chest, advancing age, and the use of other heart-toxic drugs. Your doctor may check your heart function before you may take any trastuzumab and will monitor your heart closely during your treatment. Trastuzumab may be discontinued if symptoms of heart failure appear.

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

Seek emergency help ***immediately*** and notify your health care provider, if you experience the following symptoms:

- Shortness of breath, wheezing, difficulty breathing, closing up of the throat, swelling of facial features, hives (possible allergic reaction).

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

- Shortness of breath or 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 the feet or ankles. Sudden weight gain
- Signs of infection such as redness or swelling, pain on swallowing, coughing up mucous, or painful urination.
- Pain that is unrelieved by prescribed medication

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