

Trastuzumab

Names	The generic name of this drug is trastuzumab (tras-too-zoo-mab). Herceptin® is the brand name. There may be other names for this medication.
How is it Administered?	Your medicine will be given by infusion (slow injection) into a vein (intravenous or IV). The first dose is given over 90 minutes. If that goes well, the next doses may be given over 30 minutes.
Why am I Receiving Trastuzumab?	Trastuzumab is a monoclonal antibody approved to be used alone or with other drugs to treat certain types of breast and stomach cancer that has spread (metastasized) to other parts of the body.
How Does it Work?	<p>Trastuzumab is not a traditional chemotherapy medication; it is a type of targeted therapy called a monoclonal antibody. Traditional chemo drugs identify cancer cells by their rapid rate of reproduction, and then attack them. Unfortunately, normal cells that reproduce rapidly are also attacked, which can result in unpleasant side effects.</p> <p>Trastuzumab is designed to work differently. The HER2 gene in the cell makes a receptor that sits on the surface of the cell and signals the cell to grow/multiply. When there is too much HER2, the cells grow uncontrollably. Trastuzumab targets the HER2 receptor on cancer cells, and prevents them from multiplying. It may also act by stimulating your own immune system to attack the cancer cells that have trastuzumab attached to them.</p>
What Should I Tell My Doctor Before I Begin?	<p>Tell your doctor if you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• are allergic to trastuzumab, benzyl alcohol, or any other drugs• have or have ever had heart disease, lung disease, or radiation treatment to your chest• are taking an anthracycline cancer medication such as daunorubicin, doxorubicin, epirubicin, or idarubicin• are pregnant or breastfeeding

This drug may interact with other medications. Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all prescription or over-the-counter medications, vitamins, herbal, or diet supplements that you are taking.

What Are Some Possible Side Effects?

- Back, bone, joint, and/or muscle pains
- Tiredness, weakness, and/or dizziness
- Stomach pain, heartburn, loss of appetite, mild nausea
- Diarrhea (more common) or constipation (less common)
- Flu-like/cold symptoms –chills, fever, runny nose, sore throat, headache, shortness of breath
- Problems falling asleep and/or staying asleep; depression
- Rash, pale skin, acne, and/or changes in how your nails look
- Swelling (usually of extremities - feet, legs, arms, or hands)
- Numbness, burning, or tingling in the arms, hands, feet, or legs

How Can I Manage These Side Effects?

- Ask your doctor about medication to help prevent or lessen joint or muscle pain, nausea, diarrhea, or flu/cold symptoms.
- To help prevent nausea, avoid fried, spicy, and fatty foods on the days you receive chemo and for 2-3 days afterwards.
- To help prevent constipation and dehydration (from diarrhea), drink 2-3 quarts of fluid every day, especially water, unless your doctor gives you different instructions.
- To help prevent constipation, add high fiber foods (fruits, vegetables, whole grains) to your diet and, if possible, keep moving throughout the day.
- If you become constipated, do not use laxatives or enemas without getting your doctor's permission first.
- If you have a headache, muscle aches, or other flu-like symptoms, **check with your doctor before taking any over the counter pain medication** such as acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®).
- Do not put anything on your rash, unless your doctor or nurse says you may. Keep the area around the rash clean and dry.

How Can I Manage Side Effects (con't)

- If you develop peripheral neuropathy
 - Stay as active as you can to help keep your muscles working. If you exercise in a gym, tell the instructor that you have peripheral neuropathy and ask for instructions.
 - Foot and hand massages may help relieve stiffness. After the massage, remember to clean the lotions and creams off your hands and feet.
 - Protect your hands and feet, particularly when handling hot items or when weather is severe. Use oven mitts, gloves, socks and shoes.
 - Have someone check the water temperature before you take a shower, wash dishes, etc. or use a thermometer or a part of your body that is not affected by PN.
 - Get rid of throw rugs and other obstacles that can increase your risk of falling or tripping.
 - Ask about balance training and/or physical or occupational therapy

When Should I Call the Doctor?

Go to hospital ER or call 911 immediately if you have trouble breathing or swelling in your throat or face.

Call your doctor immediately if you have:

- any sign of an allergic reaction: itching or hives, swelling (other than your face), tingling in your mouth or throat, chest tightness or pain, dizziness, or palpitations.
- any sign of infection: **fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher**, chills, cough, sore throat, pain or burning upon urination; redness or tenderness along a vein, at an IV site, or at any other wound
- difficulty breathing when lying down or have excessive coughing

Call your doctor as soon as possible if you have:

- swelling in arms/legs, gain of 5 pounds or more in 24 hours
- diarrhea of 5-6 stools in 1 day or diarrhea with weakness
- nausea, vomiting, or headache not relieved by prescribed medication or that prevents you from eating or drinking
- nausea/loss of appetite leading to weight loss of 5 pounds in 1 week
- rash that is bothersome

What Else Should I
Know About
Trastuzumab?

- Trastuzumab may cause severe or fatal allergic reactions. Usually this reaction occurs within 24 hours of treatment. **Go to the emergency room immediately if you have difficulty breathing; swelling of the lips, throat, or inside of your mouth; dizziness or fainting; or a severe skin rash.**
- You may have fever or chills during your first infusion. (Your doctor may prescribe medication to prevent/treat these symptoms.)
- Trastuzumab may cause heart problems. Your doctor will order certain lab tests to check your response to trastuzumab. Keep all appointments with your doctor and the laboratory.
- This drug may harm an unborn child. You should not plan to have children while receiving trastuzumab or for a while after treatments. Both men and women should use effective birth control during treatment. Barrier methods, such as condoms, are recommended.
- Do not breastfeed during treatment or for 6 months afterwards.
- Alcoholic beverages should be kept to a minimum or avoided completely.
- If you are having any surgery, including dental surgery, tell your doctor or dentist you are taking trastuzumab.
- If you would like more information about trastuzumab, talk to your doctor or pharmacist.