



Patient Education

Trastuzumab (tras-too-zoo-mab)

Other Names	Herceptin® (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).
Why am I Taking 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 <i>targeted therapy known as a monoclonal antibody</i>. Traditional chemotherapy drugs identify cancer cells by their rapid rate of reproduction, and then they attack those cells. Unfortunately, normal cells that reproduce rapidly are also attacked.</p> <p>Trastuzumab is designed to work differently. The HER2 gene makes a receptor that sits on the surface of the cell and signals the cell to grow/multiply. In some types of cancer, there is too much HER2, and the cells grow uncontrollably. Trastuzumab targets the HER2/neu receptor on <i>cancer cells</i>, 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>