



United Family New Hope Oncology Center

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Trastuzumab (Herceptin)

General information

Herceptin is not a chemotherapy drug. Herceptin is in a class of drugs called monoclonal antibodies or “targeted therapies.” Monoclonal antibodies use your own body to fight your cancer. Some breast cancer cells carry a protein called HER-2. Herceptin can connect itself to this protein and destroy the cancerous cell.

Food & Drug Information: Review your current prescription and non-prescription medications, including vitamins and herbal supplements with your doctor.

Possible side effects COMMON

Allergic-type reaction	Because your body may think that the Herceptin is a foreign substance, there is a chance that you could have an allergic-type reaction. You will be given medications before your Herceptin to prevent this. If you feel itchy, become nauseated, have chest pressure, difficulty speaking or swallowing, a new cough, facial swelling, pain in your belly, or a sudden feeling of fear during your infusion, let your treatment nurse know immediately .
Shortness of breath, flip-flop feeling of your heart, swelling in your arms and legs	Herceptin can cause changes in the heart. You will have a test done to check how effectively your heart pumps blood out to your body before being treated with Herceptin. If you develop any of these symptoms, your doctor know immediately .
Infection, fatigue	Your body’s ability to make red and white blood cells in the bone marrow may be decreased when the Herceptin is given with chemotherapy. Please follow the directions on the Anemia and Neutropenia Instruction sheets as directed by you doctor and/or your doctor’s nurse.
Fever and/or chills	Because Herceptin is a protein foreign to your body, you may develop symptoms such as shaking chills, fever, and muscle aches. Take Tylenol (acetaminophen) 325-500mg tablets; 1-2 tablets every 4-hours for the first 24-hours after treatment.

LESS COMMON

Diarrhea	Uncommon. Report 4 or more watery bowel movements in a 24-hour period to your doctor or your doctor’s nurse.
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It’s important to let your doctor know straight away if you feel unwell or have any severe side effects, even if they’re not mentioned above.