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## Trastuzumab: Patient drug information

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(For additional information [see "Trastuzumab: Drug information"](#))

**Brand Names: US** Herceptin

**Brand Names: Canada** Herceptin

### Warning

- Very bad infusion reactions have happened with this drug. Most of the reactions happened during or within 24 hours after the infusion. Sometimes, these have been deadly. Talk with the doctor.
- This drug may raise the chance of very bad and sometimes deadly heart problems. The chance may be higher if you are using daunorubicin, doxorubicin, epirubicin, idarubicin, or mitoxantrone. The chance may also be higher if you use them after getting this drug. Talk with your doctor.
- You will need to have heart function tests while taking this drug. Talk with the doctor.
- Very bad and sometimes deadly lung problems have happened with this drug. Call your doctor right away if you have lung or breathing problems like trouble breathing, shortness of breath, or a cough that is new or worse.
- This drug may cause harm to the unborn baby or loss of the unborn baby if you take it while you are pregnant or if you get pregnant within 7 months after your last dose.
- Use birth control that you can trust to prevent pregnancy while taking this drug and for at least 7 months after stopping this drug.
- If you get pregnant while taking this drug or within 7 months after your last dose, call your doctor right away.

### What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat breast cancer.
- It is used to treat stomach cancer.

### What do I need to tell my doctor BEFORE I take this drug?

- If you have an allergy to trastuzumab or any other part of this drug.
- If you are allergic to any drugs like this one, any other drugs, foods, or other substances. Tell your

doctor about the allergy and what signs you had, like rash; hives; itching; shortness of breath; wheezing; cough; swelling of face, lips, tongue, or throat; or any other signs.

This drug may interact with other drugs or health problems.

Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all of your drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe for you to take this drug with all of your drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug without checking with your doctor.

## What are some things I need to know or do while I take this drug?

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- Low white blood cell counts have happened more often in people getting this drug with chemo compared to people getting only chemo. Low white blood cell counts may raise the chance of getting an infection. If you have questions, talk with your doctor.
- If you are 65 or older, use this drug with care. You could have more side effects.
- If you are able to get pregnant, a pregnancy test will be done to show that you are NOT pregnant before starting this drug. Talk with your doctor.
- Tell your doctor if you are breast-feeding. You will need to talk about any risks to your baby.

## What are some side effects that I need to call my doctor about right away?

**WARNING/CAUTION:** Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.
- Signs of infection like fever, chills, very bad sore throat, ear or sinus pain, cough, more sputum or change in color of sputum, pain with passing urine, mouth sores, or wound that will not heal.
- Signs of heart problems like chest pain, fast heartbeat, a heartbeat that does not feel normal, or shortness of breath.
- Signs of high or low blood pressure like very bad headache or dizziness, passing out, change in eyesight.
- Shortness of breath, a big weight gain, or swelling in the arms or legs.
- Dizziness.
- Very upset stomach or throwing up.
- Very loose stools (diarrhea).
- Any unexplained bruising or bleeding.
- Feeling very tired or weak.
- A burning, numbness, or tingling feeling that is not normal.
- Low mood (depression).

## What are some other side effects of this drug?

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother you or do not go away:

- Upset stomach or throwing up.
- Loose stools (diarrhea).
- Feeling tired or weak.
- Not hungry.
- Belly pain.
- Headache.
- Weight loss.
- Change in taste.
- Bone or joint pain.
- Back pain.
- Not able to sleep.
- Nose and throat irritation.
- Flu-like signs.
- Stuffy nose.
- Runny nose.
- Muscle pain.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your doctor. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

## **How is this drug best taken?**

Use this drug as ordered by your doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

- It is given as an infusion into a vein over a period of time.
- Acetaminophen and diphenhydramine may be given before this drug to lower fever and chills.

## **What do I do if I miss a dose?**

- Call your doctor to find out what to do.

## **How do I store and/or throw out this drug?**

- If you need to store this drug at home, talk with your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist about how to store it.

## **General drug facts**

- If your symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your doctor.
- Do not share your drugs with others and do not take anyone else's drugs.
- Keep a list of all your drugs (prescription, natural products, vitamins, OTC) with you. Give this list to

your doctor.

- Talk with the doctor before starting any new drug, including prescription or OTC, natural products, or vitamins.
- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Check with your pharmacist about how to throw out unused drugs.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

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