



NYUCancerInstitute

P A T I E N T I N F O R M A T I O N

The side effects listed below are those that occur most frequently. Other side effects may occur; please contact your doctor or oncology nurse to report any medical problems.

Dose _____

ERYTHROPOIETIN (EPO); EPOETIN ALFA (Procrit® Epogen®)

Many chemotherapy drugs cause the red blood cells to fall to a level that may cause weakness and dizziness.

Your doctor has prescribed Erythropoietin to increase the production of red blood cells in your bone marrow. The effect of this increased production is the same as getting a transfusion of packed red blood cells (PRBC's), but it takes longer to achieve that effect (approximately 6 - 8 weeks). This drug is given in injection form on a weekly basis.

Even though you are receiving this drug, you may still require a transfusion, but hopefully the number of transfusions you will need will be reduced.

Your doctor will order blood counts to monitor your progress.

Iron is essential in order for the Procrit to be effective. Take one of the following products that are commercially available:

1. Solgar **Gentle Iron®** (Iron Bisglycinate) 25 mg - Take 5 capsules daily in two divided doses, e.g., 3 tabs in the a.m. & 2 tabs in the p.m.
2. Ferrous Sulfate 325 mg - Take one pill twice a day.

Side Effects

This drug is very well tolerated. Side effects, which have rarely been experienced, are high blood pressure, headaches, pain at the injection site, and flu-like symptoms such as muscle and joint pain.

Storage Requirements for Procrit

- a. **Keep refrigerated; do not freeze.**
- b. Inspect the liquid to be sure it is clear and colorless before administering dose.
- c. **Do not shake the contents of the vial.**