



## Darbepoetin (Aranesp®)

("DAR-be-POE-etin")

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**How this drug is given:** By injection

**Purpose:** Darbepoetin is a protein that is made naturally in the body. It works to increase red blood cells in the body so that the side effects of anemia can be reduced or reversed.

### Things that may occur during or after treatment

- Your blood pressure may go up. If this happens, you may be given medication to help with this. If you have headaches or dizziness, let your care team know right away.
- Skin changes such as itching or a rash on your body may occur. Ask your care team what lotions or creams you may use.
- Some patients may have nausea or vomiting. You may be given medicine to help with this.
- If you develop a new or worsening cough or shortness of breath, report this to your care team.
- Your body may not be able to get rid of extra fluid. This is called edema. You may notice some swelling in your arms or legs.
- You are at increased risk of blood clots. If you have pain, swelling and/or warmth in one leg, or if you develop sudden shortness of breath let your care team know right away.

### Things that may occur after treatment ends (even months to years later)

- Fertility and Related Precautions:
  - a. It is very important to use birth control if you are having sex, because this drug may be harmful to an unborn baby.
  - b. Women should not breastfeed while receiving this drug.

*The above information includes some, but not necessarily all, of the possible side effects of this medication. The side effects in this teaching sheet may not be the same ones you experience. Your side effects may be different, depending on how often you receive treatment (your schedule) and how much you receive each time (your dosage). Side effects may also vary if you take other medications. Please talk with your care team if you have questions about possible side effects you may experience. This document should not take the place of conversations with members of your care team. If you experience any significant change in your health during or after treatment, contact a member of your care team right away.*