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2. Herceptin

Herceptin

Generic name: [trastuzumab](#) [*tras-TOO-zoo-mab*]

Drug class: [HER2 inhibitors](#)

Medically reviewed by [Philip Thornton, DipPharm](#). Last updated on Apr 24, 2024.

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What is Herceptin?

Herceptin is a cancer medicine that interferes with the growth and spread of cancer cells in the body. Herceptin is used to treat certain types of [breast cancer](#) or [stomach cancer](#). Other cancer medicines are sometimes used in combination with Herceptin.

Herceptin is sometimes used when the cancer has spread to other parts of the body (metastatic).

Warnings

Do not use Herceptin if you are pregnant. It could harm the unborn baby. Avoid becoming pregnant for at least 7 months after your last dose of trastuzumab. Use effective birth control, and tell your doctor if you become pregnant during treatment.

Herceptin can cause [heart failure](#), especially if you have heart disease or if you are also receiving certain other cancer medicines.

Some side effects may occur during the injection. Tell your caregivers if you feel dizzy, nauseated, light-headed, weak, short of breath, or if you have a [headache](#), fever, or chills.

Before taking this medicine

You should not be treated with Herceptin if you are allergic to trastuzumab.

To make sure Herceptin is safe for you, tell your doctor if you have ever had:

- heart disease;
- congestive heart failure;
- a [heart attack](#); or
- any [allergies](#) or breathing problems.

Trastuzumab can cause heart failure, especially if you have heart disease or if you are also receiving certain other cancer medicines (such as [daunorubicin](#), [doxorubicin](#), [epirubicin](#), or [idarubicin](#)).

You may need to have a negative pregnancy test before starting this treatment.

Do not use Herceptin if you are pregnant. This medicine can cause injury or death to the unborn baby. Use effective birth control to prevent pregnancy while you are using this medicine and for at least 7 months after your last dose. Tell your doctor if you become pregnant during treatment.

If you become pregnant while using this medicine or within 7 months after you stop, your name may be listed on a pregnancy registry to track the effects of trastuzumab on the baby.

It may not be safe to breastfeed while using this medicine and for up to 7 months after your last dose. Ask your doctor about any risk.

 [Herceptin pregnancy and breastfeeding warnings](#) (more detail)

How is Herceptin given?

Herceptin is given as an infusion into a vein. A healthcare provider will give you this injection.

Herceptin is usually given once every week or every 1 to 3 weeks. Follow your doctor's dosing instructions very carefully.

Your doctor will perform a medical test to make sure trastuzumab is the right medicine to treat your cancer.

This medicine must be given slowly, and the infusion can take up to 90 minutes to complete.

You may need frequent medical tests to be sure this medicine is not causing harmful effects. Your cancer treatments may be delayed based on the results.

Your heart function may need to be checked before and during treatment with trastuzumab. You may also need heart function testing every 6 months for 2 years after your last dose of this medicine.

Herceptin is usually given for 52 weeks, or until your body no longer responds to the medication.

Dosing information

Usual Adult Dose of Herceptin for Breast Cancer:

For use in the treatment of metastatic breast cancer:

Administer trastuzumab, alone or in combination with paclitaxel.

Initial dose: 4 mg/kg IV infusion over 90 minutes

Subsequent therapy: 2 mg/kg IV infusion over 30 minutes once weekly until disease progression

Usual Adult Dose of Herceptin for Breast Cancer -- Adjuvant:

Administer according to one of the following doses and schedules:

1) Initiate trastuzumab during and following paclitaxel, docetaxel, or docetaxel/carboplatin:

Initial dose: 4 mg/kg IV infusion over 90 minutes then 2 mg/kg IV infusion over 30 minutes weekly during chemotherapy for the first 12 weeks (paclitaxel or docetaxel) or 18 weeks (docetaxel/carboplatin).

Subsequent therapy: one week after the last weekly dose of trastuzumab, give trastuzumab as 6 mg/kg IV infusion over 30 to 90 minutes every 3 weeks for a total of 52 weeks of therapy.

or

2) Initiate trastuzumab as a single agent within 3 weeks following completion of all chemotherapy.

Initial dose: 8 mg/kg IV infusion over 90 minutes

Subsequent therapy: 6 mg/kg IV infusion over 30 to 90 minutes every 3 weeks for a total of 17 doses (52 weeks of therapy)

Usual Adult Dose of Herceptin for Esophageal Carcinoma:

For use in the treatment of metastatic gastric or gastroesophageal junction adenocarcinoma:

Administer trastuzumab in combination with cisplatin and capecitabine or 5-fluorouracil.

Initial dose: 8 mg/kg IV infusion over 90 minutes

Subsequent therapy: 6 mg/kg IV infusion over 30 to 90 minutes every 3 weeks until disease progression

Usual Adult Dose of Herceptin for Gastric Cancer:

For use in the treatment of metastatic gastric or gastroesophageal junction adenocarcinoma:

Administer trastuzumab in combination with cisplatin and capecitabine or 5-fluorouracil.

Initial dose: 8 mg/kg IV infusion over 90 minutes

Subsequent therapy: 6 mg/kg IV infusion over 30 to 90 minutes every 3 weeks until disease progression

 [Detailed Herceptin dosage information](#)

What happens if I miss a dose?

Call your doctor for instructions if you miss an appointment for your trastuzumab injection.

What happens if I overdose?

Seek emergency medical attention or call the Poison Help line at 1-800-222-1222.

What should I avoid while receiving Herceptin?

Follow your doctor's instructions about any restrictions on food, beverages, or activity.

Herceptin side effects

Get emergency medical help if you have **signs of an allergic reaction to Herceptin**: [hives](#); difficult breathing; swelling of your face, lips, tongue, or throat.

Some side effects may occur during the injection, or in the days afterward. Tell your caregiver right away if you feel dizzy, nauseated, itchy, light-headed, weak, short of breath, or if you have a headache, fever, chills, or chest pain.

Call your doctor at once if you have:

- new or worsening cough;
- a light-headed feeling, like you might pass out;

- severe headache, blurred vision, pounding in your neck or ears;
- blisters or ulcers in your mouth, red or swollen gums, trouble swallowing;
- **heart problems** - pounding heartbeats, dizziness, swelling in your lower legs, rapid weight gain, feeling short of breath;
- **low blood cell counts** - fever, chills, tiredness, skin sores, easy bruising, unusual bleeding, pale skin, cold hands and feet, feeling light-headed; or
- **signs of tumor cell breakdown** - tiredness, weakness, muscle cramps, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fast or slow heart rate, decreased urination, tingling in your hands and feet or around your mouth.

Your cancer treatments may be delayed or permanently discontinued if you have certain side effects.

Common Herceptin side effects may include:

- heart problems;
- nausea, [diarrhea](#), [weight loss](#);
- headache;
- trouble sleeping, feeling tired;
- low blood cell counts;
- rash;
- fever, chills, cough, or other signs of infection;
- mouth sores;
- altered sense of taste; or
- [cold symptoms](#) such as stuffy nose, sinus pain, [sore throat](#).

This is not a complete list of side effects and others may occur. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

 [Herceptin side effects](#) (more detail)

Related/similar drugs

Trodelvy

Trodelvy is a targeted anticancer medication used to treat types of breast cancer and bladder ...

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Nivolumab (brand name Opdivo) is an immunotherapy treatment that treats many cancers, such as ...

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5.8 / 10

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What other drugs will affect Herceptin?

Other drugs may interact with trastuzumab, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, [vitamins](#), and [herbal products](#). Tell your doctor about all your current medicines and any medicine you start or stop using.

Trastuzumab can have long lasting effects on your heart, especially if you receive other cancer medicines. For at least 7 months after your last dose of Herceptin, tell any doctor who treats you that you have used this medicine.

 [Herceptin drug interactions](#) (more detail)

Does Herceptin interact with my other drugs?

Enter medications to view a detailed interaction report using our [Drug Interaction Checker](#).

Herceptin

+

Enter a drug name

Add

Herceptin Biosimilars

Biosimilar and interchangeable products are biological products that are highly similar to and have no clinically meaningful differences from the reference product.

Reference products

These are biological products that have already been approved by the FDA, against which biosimilar products are compared. There is 1 for Herceptin.

Herceptin (trastuzumab) - Genentech, Inc.



Formulation type	Strength
Multi-Dose Vial	420 mg Discontinued
Single-Dose Vial	150 mg

Herceptin biosimilar products

Biosimilar products can only be dispensed in place of the **reference product** if the healthcare provider specifically prescribes the biosimilar product by name.

Pharmacy laws for biosimilar prescribing may vary by state

Hercessi (trastuzumab-strf) - Accord BioPharma Inc.



Herzuma (trastuzumab-pkrb) - CELLTRION, Inc.



Kanjinti (trastuzumab-anns) - Amgen Inc.



Ogivri (trastuzumab-dkst) - Biocon Biologics Inc.



Ontruzant (trastuzumab-dttb) - Samsung Bioepis Co., Ltd.



Trazimera (trastuzumab-qyyp) - Pfizer Ireland Pharmaceuticals



Popular FAQ

What are monoclonal antibodies?



What are biosimilar drugs and how do they compare to biologics?



How long can you stay on Herceptin and Perjeta?



What happens after Herceptin treatment?



How long can I stay on Herceptin?



What are the biosimilars of Herceptin?



More FAQ

- [What are biologic drugs and how do they work?](#)
- [What biosimilars have been approved in the United States?](#)
- [What is Herceptin? Is Herceptin a chemo drug? How does it work?](#)

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Patient resources

Other brands

[Trazimera](#), [Ogivri](#), [Ontruzant](#), [Kanjinti](#), ... +2 more

Professional resources

- [Herceptin prescribing information](#)
- [Trastuzumab \(AHFS Monograph\)](#)

Other brands

[Trazimera](#), [Ogivri](#), [Ontruzant](#), [Kanjinti](#), ... +2 more

Related treatment guides

- [Breast Cancer, Adjuvant](#)
- [Breast Cancer, Metastatic](#)
- [Esophageal Carcinoma](#)
- [Breast Cancer](#)
- [Gastric Cancer](#)

Further information

Remember, keep this and all other medicines out of the reach of children, never share your medicines with others, and use Herceptin only for the indication prescribed.

Always consult your healthcare provider to ensure the information displayed on this page applies to your personal circumstances.

[Medical Disclaimer](#)

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DRUG STATUS

Availability

Rx Prescription only

[Pregnancy & Lactation](#)

 Risk data available

CSA Schedule*

N/A Not a controlled drug



Approval History

10+ years FDA approved 1998



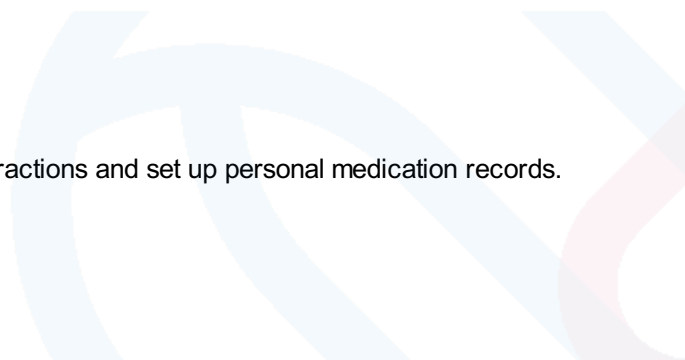
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8.5 / 10

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