Herceptin

**Definition:** Herceptin is a targeted drug. These drugs act specifically on specific cells. While it has a greater effect on cancer cells and causes fewer side effects on healthy cells. Due to the fact that this drug is very expensive and its use for patients and insurances has huge costs, the treating physician must select exactly the patients who need this drug and their cells respond to this drug. Sometimes patients think that because this drug is costly, it can work miracles for all patients, and they urge their doctor to prescribe this drug for them, but it should be emphasized that this drug is effective only for a certain number of patients and for about 75% of patients who lack receptors on their cells are ineffective.

**Proper time of injection**

Treatment sessions with this drug in different drug regimens are different according to the instructions of the Ministry of Health of each country. In our country, the accepted method is that the drug is started after the first 4 sessions of chemotherapy and along with other drugs. After the first dose, wait three weeks and the next dose is injected into the patient, after which the drug is continued every week until 9 weeks when the treatment is over. Some doctors start the drug after the end of chemotherapy or may choose a different time of injection or dose depending on the opinion of the chemist (oncologist).

**How to store the medicine:** Due to the sensitivity of the solution and depending on the type of drug manufacturer, this drug should be stored in the middle of the refrigerator at a temperature of 4 °C. If it is dissolved with distilled water it must be injected in the same day, and if the drug is dissolved with the drug solvent it can be stored and used for up to two weeks. This medicine must be injected in a hospital under the supervision of a doctor.

**Side effects:** The most common side effects of Herceptin in a person receiving it for the first time are fever and chills. Some people may also have pain, weakness, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, headache, difficulty breathing, or a rash. These side effects usually get milder after the first treatment.

Sometimes it can also cause heart damage. This sometimes leads to heart failure. Herceptin may also affect the lungs, sometimes leading to difficulty breathing. If these symptoms occur, the injection will be stopped.

**Training of the patient**

- Refer to your doctor regularly for medication.
- Pay attention to how to keep the medicine at home for better effectiveness of the medicine.
- If you have a history of allergies, let your nurse or doctor know before injecting.
- Trust your nurse when injecting medicine and follow the injection steps calmly.
- Inform your nurse if you have any allergy symptoms while injecting.
- The speed of drug injection in the first session of treatment is longer than the next visits, so do not rush to finish the serum injection.
- A proper diet free of stimulants (spices, coffee and soft drinks) is very important to reduce side effects after discharge.
If you have any questions or problems, call the following number:

023-33437824, Internal Emergency