

# Medication Information Card

## Erythropoietin (E – poe – e – tin)

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### Other names for this medication

EPO  
Epogen<sup>®</sup>  
Procrit<sup>®</sup>

There are other names for this medication.

### How this medication works

This medication is a hormone that helps bone marrow make more red blood cells. The kidneys usually produce the natural form of erythropoietin. In kidney failure there is not enough of the natural hormone produced and therefore not enough red blood cells.

Red blood cells carry oxygen to all body tissues. When there are not enough red blood cells, this is called anemia.

Erythropoietin helps improve the level of fatigue (feeling tired) and lack of energy that is part of anemia.

It may take 5 to 8 weeks before this medication begins to work.

This medication must be kept in a refrigerator.

## **How this medication works**

This medication can be taken 2 ways:

- It may be given through a small tube into a vein. This is called an intravenous.
- It may be given by a small needle into the skin. This is called a subcutaneous injection.

Your health care providers will decide the best method for you.

This medication may affect your blood pressure. It is important to have your blood pressure checked regularly.

## **While taking this medication you may notice**

- an increase in energy
- an increase in appetite
- diarrhea
- nausea
- bone pain
- weakness

## **Contact your doctor if you notice**

- chest pain
- fast heart beat
- an increase in blood pressure
- swelling of ankles or feet
- signs of infection such as fever, chills, sore throat, muscle aches
- your access clots
- seizures