Bevacizumab (Be vuh siz uh mab)
Patient Education

US Brand Names: Avastin
Therapeutic Category: monoclonal antibody

What is this medicine used for?
Used to treat cancer. More specifically this particular drug is used to treat colon or rectal cancer. May be used in other types of cancer.

How does it work?
Bevacizumab works by starving the cancer by cutting off its blood supply. This medication is a targeted therapy that reacts with certain markers on the surface of cells that form blood vessels in your body. This medicine kills or stops the growth of blood vessel cells at the cancer site.

What should my doctor or nurse know before I take this medication?
- If you are allergic to any medicines.
- If you are taking other over the counter or prescription medicines, including vitamins and herbal remedies.
- If you are, or may be pregnant.
- If you are breast feeding.

How is this drug given?
- This medicine can be used alone or in combination with other cancer medicine.
- This medicine is given into a vein.

What are the general precautions when taking this medicine?
- Talk with your doctor or nurse before taking aspirin, aspirin-containing products, over the counter or prescription medications, including vitamins and herbal remedies.
- Drink 8 to 10 glasses of non-caffeinated liquid every day (unless told otherwise by your doctor or nurse).
- If you or your partner can get pregnant, use birth control during your treatment. Once
completing treatment, discuss the timing for discontinuing birth control measures with your provider. (See Patient Teaching Sheet: Fertility)

What are the common side effects of this medicine?

- Hypertension (high blood pressure)
- Abdominal pain
- Headache, dizziness

Danger signals to report immediately to your doctor or nurse:

- Signs or symptoms of infection. This include a fever of 100.4 F (38 C) or greater, chills, severe sore throat, ear or sinus pain, cough, increased sputum or change in color, painful urination, mouth sores, wound that will not heal, or anal itching or pain.
- Severe nausea or vomiting or diarrhea not controlled by medication.
- Not able to eat or drink.
- Bleeding from your nose, mouth, gums, or in your urine or bowel movements. Bruising that does not heal.
- Feeling extremely tired, weak, dizzy or light headed.
- Pain or swelling in your arms or legs.
- Go to your nearest emergency room for sudden onset of abdominal pain.

Prepared by the Oncology Nursing Committee 10/04.
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