

# Anemia

Anemia is a condition that happens when your blood is lacking in healthy red blood cells. Red blood cells are the main transporter of oxygen to the body's organs. If red blood cells are lacking in hemoglobin (red, iron-rich protein) your body will not get enough oxygen.

Anemia has many symptoms, which may include the following:

- Ongoing or extreme fatigue
- Rapid or irregular heartbeat
- Constantly feeling cold
- Shortness of breath
- Dizziness or lightheadedness
- Loss of concentration or confusion
- Pale skin (decreased pinkness of lips, gums, lining of the eyelids, nail beds, and palms)

Notes

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## Anemia

The treatment of anemia is based on the type of anemia you have. Your physician may prescribe nutritional supplements, changes in your diet, and/or medications. Epoetin alfa is an example used to treat anemia.



Erythropoietin is a hormone that is normally produced by the kidneys. Epoetin alfa is a manmade version of the hormone erythropoietin. Epoetin alfa travels to the bone marrow to signal the bone marrow to produce red blood cells. Epoetin alfa is administered as an injection.

Iron is needed by your body to make red blood cells. Many people who take Epoetin alfa also need to take extra iron. Iron can be given as a pill or as an injection. If you are taking iron pills as directed by your doctor, the following tips may be helpful:

- To avoid constipation, eat high-fiber foods. Fresh fruits and vegetables that are *low in potassium* are good choices
- Report an upset stomach to your doctor

AL03030A 5/06

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