

This material will help you understand your medication, Avastin (generic name: Bevacizumab), and its common side effects.

## **What is Avastin? How does it work?**

Avastin is a therapy treatment that was developed to help stop tumor growth in certain cancers. It works by blocking a protein called VEGF (vascular endothelial growth factor), which helps blood vessels to form. Cells normally make this protein, but cancer cells make too much VEGF. This allows the tumor to grow faster than normal cells. Avastin has been used successfully in treating macular degeneration.

Unlike chemotherapy that attacks cancer cells, Avastin cuts off the blood supply feeding the tumor. This can help to stop the tumor from growing.

## **How is Avastin administered?**

Avastin is given by injecting it into your eye using a very thin needle. A doctor will give you the injection in the clinic. You will receive numbing eye drops before the injection, so you should not feel any pain. Your doctor will determine the number of treatments you need, which s/he will adjust if necessary.

## **What are common side effects of this medication?**

Everyone reacts differently to Avastin therapy. Although some people may have side effects, most do not. Common side effects include:

- High blood pressure
- Nosebleeds
- Headache
- Taste change
- Dry skin
- Inflammation
- Watery eyes

Be sure to tell your doctor if any of these side effects last a long time or seem to get worse. Avastin may cause other side effects. Contact your doctor if you have any symptoms that worry you while receiving this medication.

If you have any other questions about this medication, talk to your eye doctor or pharmacist.

**For more information, scan these codes with your smartphone or visit the websites listed.**



<http://www.avastin.com/patient>



<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/druginfo/meds/a607001.html#side-effects>

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