

Bon Secours Richmond
Pharmacy & Therapeutics Committees
Epoetin and Aranesp Dosage Adjustments
11/05

Recommendations:

- Pharmacist will monitor the Hgb of all patients receiving erythropoietin products.
- A pop up message will be added to SMS pharmacy for the pharmacists to check the patients Hgb on order entry and suggest appropriate dose adjustments when necessary per the package insert guidelines below.
- Pharmacists will review the dosage history for all patients with Hgbs above 12 g/dL (Hgb should not exceed 12 g/dL per the package insert). A 25% dosage reduction will be recommended if the dose has not been decreased recently. Pharmacists will call the physician to discuss the patient’s recent dosage history and appropriate erythropoietin dose.
- Erythropoietin products will be placed on hold when the Hgb is above 13 g/dL, the physician will be contacted, and erythropoietin will be restarted at a reduced dosage when the Hgb drops to \leq 12 g/dL.
- Pharmacists may order a CBC if one has not been ordered.

DOSAGE ADJUSTMENTS FOR EPOETIN OR ARANESP	
CHRONIC RENAL FAILURE & CANCER CHEMOTHERAPY PATIENTS	
Hemoglobin (Hgb) Situation:	Appropriate Response:
Increasing / Approaching 12 g/dL	Reduce Dose by 25%
Continues to Increase	Hold Dose Until Hgb Begins to Decrease, Then Reinitiate at a Dose 25% Below Previous Dose.
Increase > 1.0 g/dL Within a 2-week Period	Reduce Dose by 25%
> 13 g/dL	Hold Dose Until Hgb Drops to 12 g/dL, Then Reinitiate at a Dose 25% Below Previous Dose.
Hgb does not increase by 1 g/dl over 4 weeks and Iron Stores Are Adequate	Increase Dose by 25%
CANCER CHEMOTHERAPY PATIENTS	
Hemoglobin (Hgb) Situation:	Appropriate Response:
Epoetin*: No Increase in Hgb After 8 Weeks	Increase to 300 units/kg TIW
Aranesp: <1.0 g/dL Increase After 6 Weeks of Chemotherapy	Increase Dose Up to 4.5 mcg/kg

Dosage increases should be made no more frequently than once a month.

*If patients have not responded satisfactorily to epoetin dose of 60,000 Units Weekly after 4 weeks, it is unlikely that they will respond to higher doses of epoetin.