

Epogen (Epo) (Erythropoietin)

What is Epogen?

Erythropoietin is a hormone that regulates red blood cell production. Epogen is the synthetic form of erythropoietin, and is dispensed as a medication/drug. Although Epo has several uses, it is used in the NICU to treat or prevent anemia (low red blood cell count, low hemoglobin). It helps to decrease the number of blood transfusions your baby may need. Hemoglobin is also the part of the red blood cell that carries oxygen.

How is Epogen given?

Epogen can be given as a shot 3 times a week, or can be given through an IV.

How do you know if my baby needs Epogen?

Epogen is almost a certainty if your baby was born prematurely. It is given to try to prevent the need for blood transfusions. Sometimes, if your baby's hemoglobin or red blood cell count is extremely low, he/she may need a transfusion regardless.

What causes a low red blood cell count (anemia)?

Please see the informational form called "anemia".