### NURSING PROCESS FOCUS  Clients Receiving Epoetin Alfa

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<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Potential Nursing Diagnoses</th>
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| Prior to administration:  
  - Obtain complete health history including allergies, drug history, and possible drug reactions.  
  - Assess reason for drug administration such as presence/history of anemia secondary to chronic renal failure, malignancy, chemotherapy, autologous blood donation, and HIV-infected clients treated with zidovudine.  
  - Assess vital signs, especially blood pressure.  
  - Assess complete blood count, specifically hematocrit and hemoglobin levels, to establish baseline values. |  
  - Tissue Perfusion, Ineffective, related to ineffective response to drug  
  - Injury, (weakness, dizziness, syncope), Risk for, related to anemia  
  - Injury, Risk for, related to seizure activity secondary to drug  
  - Activity Intolerance, related to RBC deficiency  
  - Knowledge, Deficient, related to drug therapy |

### Planning: Client Goals and Expected Outcomes

The client will:  
- Exhibit an increase in hematocrit level and improvement in anemia-related symptoms.  
- Immediately report severe headache, chest pain, confusion, numbness, or loss of movement in an extremity.  
- Demonstrate an understanding of the drug’s action by accurately describing drug side effects and precautions.

### Implementation

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<th>Interventions and (Rationales)</th>
<th>Client Education/Discharge Planning</th>
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<td>- Monitor vital signs, especially blood pressure. (The rate of hypertension is directly related to the rate of rise of the hematocrit. Clients who have existing hypertension are at higher risk for stroke and seizures. Hypertension is also much more likely in clients with chronic renal failure.)</td>
<td>- Instruct client to periodically monitor blood pressure using proper monitoring equipment. Consistent increases in blood pressure should be reported immediately.</td>
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<td>- Monitor for side effects, especially symptoms of neurological or cardiovascular events. (Headache, seizures, and hypertension have been related to drug usage.)</td>
<td>- Instruct client to report side effects such as nausea, vomiting, constipation, redness/pain at injection site, confusion, numbness, chest pain, and difficulty breathing.</td>
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<td>- Monitor client’s ability to self-administer medication. (Inability to self-administer medication requires the nurse to arrange for someone else to administer the medication.)</td>
<td>- Instruct client in the technique for subcutaneous injection if client is to self-administer the medication, and on the proper disposal of needles and syringes.</td>
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<td>- Monitor laboratory values such as hematocrit and hemoglobin to evaluate effectiveness of treatment. (Increases in hematocrit and hemoglobin values indicate increased RBC production.)</td>
<td>- Instruct client to keep all laboratory appointments for testing and to adjust activities according to the latest hematocrit value.</td>
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<td>- Monitor client for signs of seizure activity. (Seizures result in a rapid rise in the hematocrit—especially during first 90 days of treatment.)</td>
<td>- Instruct client to avoid driving or performing hazardous activities until the effects of the drug are known.</td>
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|  - Monitor client for signs of thrombus such as swelling, warmth, and pain in an extremity. (As hematocrit rises, there is an increased chance of thrombus formation, particularly for clients with chronic renal failure.) |  - Instruct client to:  
  - Report any increase in size, pain, and/or warmth in an extremity.  
  - Monitor for signs and symptoms of blood clots.  
  - Avoid rubbing or massaging calves and to report leg discomfort. |
|  - Monitor dietary intake. Ensure adequate intake of all essential nutrients. (Response to this medication is minimal if blood levels of iron, folate acid, and vitamin B₁₂ are deficient.) |  - Instruct client to:  
  - Maintain adequate dietary intake of essential vitamins and nutrients.  
  - Continue to follow necessary dietary restrictions if receiving renal dialysis. |

### Evaluation of Outcome Criteria

Evaluate the effectiveness of drug therapy by confirming that client goals and expected outcomes have been met (see “Planning”).  
- The client exhibits an increase in hematocrit level and improvement in anemia-related symptoms.  
- The client reports severe headache, chest pain, confusion, numbness, or loss of movement in an extremity.  
- The client demonstrates an understanding of the drug’s action by accurately describing drug side effects and precautions.