



Title	Erythropoiesis-Stimulating Agents for Anemia of Cancer or of Chemotherapy: Systematic Review and Economic Evaluation
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Aim

To assess the clinical efficacy, clinical harm, and economic implications of using erythropoiesis-stimulating agents (ESA) in adult patients with anemia due to cancer or chemotherapy.

Conclusions and results

The use of erythropoiesis-stimulating agents (ESAs) by patients with cancer led to clinically meaningful improvements in quality of life (QoL) and decreased the risk of blood transfusions. However, ESA use led to an increased risk in all-cause mortality, a significantly increased risk in serious adverse events, and cost-utility ratios exceeding commonly accepted standards for economic attractiveness. These considerations raise potential safety concerns.

Recommendations

Not applicable.

Methods

A systematic review and analysis of clinical literature was used to determine clinical benefits and assess the impact of ESAs in managing cancer-related anemia. Information from the literature review provided data for modeling the trade-off of healthcare resources for effectiveness, focusing on the use of ESAs versus no ESAs.

Further research/reviews required

We found no evidence to show that the risks or benefits of ESA therapy differed among patients who did or did not meet recently revised criteria for their use in patients with cancer. These findings suggest that existing practice guidelines should be reassessed and that further review by regulatory authorities may be advisable.