Te Whatu Ora
Health New Zealand
Waitaha Canterbury

RITONAVIR

ri-ton-ah-veer

What does it do?

Ritonavir is used with other medicines to control HIV.

Before you start

- Tell your doctor if you have high cholesterol, haemophilia or if you have ever had hepatitis B or C.
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding.

How should you take it?

Take *ritonavir* regularly as directed with food and a glass of water.
It is very important to take *ritonavir* regularly. If you often forget to take it, it may not work as well.

Do not stop taking *ritonavir* without talking to your doctor first.

What if you forget a dose?

If it is nearly time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and take your next dose at the usual time. Otherwise, take the missed dose as soon as you remember. Do not take two doses at the same time.

Can you take other medicines?

Ritonavir can react with many medicines, sometimes with severe results. Remember to tell your pharmacist or doctor you are taking *ritonavir* before starting any other medicines or treatments, including over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, herbal products or recreational drugs.

What side effects might you notice?

Side Effects	Recommended action
Severe stomach pain, nausea	Tell your doctor immediately
Dizziness Joint aches and pains Tingling or numbness Changes in taste, sore throat, cough Flushing Stomach upset	Tell your doctor if troublesome

If you notice any other effects, discuss them with your doctor or pharmacist.

Other information:

- You will need regular blood tests while taking *ritonavir* to check your viral load.
- As your HIV comes under control, your immune system begins to recover. It may start fighting infections better than before which may make you unwell for a while. Your doctor may call this Immune Reconstitution Inflammatory Syndrome (IRIS).
- Weight gain may occur with treatment for HIV. Discuss this with your health professional.