

RITONAVIR

ri-to-na-veer

What does it do?

Ritonavir is used to control HIV.

Before you start

- Tell your doctor if you have heart, liver, or kidney problems, diabetes, high cholesterol, or haemophilia.
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding.

How should you take it?

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

Take the tablets with a glass of water.

Measure the liquid carefully with an oral syringe or measuring spoon. Shake the bottle well before measuring each dose.

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.

Tell your pharmacist or doctor about all medicines or treatments that you may be taking including vitamins, herbal products, or recreational drugs.

What side effects might you notice?

| Side Effects | Recommended action |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Symptoms of allergy including: skin rash, itching, swelling, trouble breathing Symptoms of liver problems including: yellow skin or eyes, itching, dark urine, pale bowel motions, abdominal pain Severe stomach pain, nausea Chest pain, fainting | Tell your doctor immediately |
| Peeing more often, feeling thirsty | Tell your doctor |
| Dizziness, headache, tiredness or weakness, trouble sleeping Joint, muscle or bone 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 if it is causing problems with your liver or kidneys. You will also need blood tests 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 Syndrome.
- Treatment for HIV may change your body shape. These changes can include fat build-up, fat loss, or both. Discuss this with your doctor.
- Do not stop taking *ritonavir* without talking to your doctor first.

This leaflet contains important, but not all, information about this medicine.

Prepared by the MyMedicines Committee at Christchurch Hospital, Te Whatu Ora - Waitaha, New Zealand. March 2023