Te Whatu Ora
Health New Zealand
Waitaha Canterbury

RIFABUTIN

rif-ah-bew-tin

What does it do?

Rifabutin is an antibiotic used to treat and prevent bacterial infections.

Before you start

- Tell your doctor if you have liver or kidney problems.
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding.

How should you take it?

Take *rifabutin* regularly as directed. You can take it with or without food. Keep taking it until the course is finished, even if you start to feel better.
It is important to take it regularly. If you often forget to take it, it may not work as well.
Capsule: Take with a glass of water.
Liquid: Shake well before use. Measure each dose carefully with an oral syringe or measuring spoon.

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?

Some medicines available without a prescription may react with *rifabutin* including:

- levonorgestrel emergency contraceptive pill (e.g. Postinor-1®)

Tell your pharmacist or doctor about all medicines or treatments that you may be taking, including vitamins, herbal products (e.g. St John's wort) or recreational drugs.

What side effects might you notice?

Side Effects	Recommended action
Symptoms of liver problems including: yellow skin or eyes, itching, dark urine, pale bowel motions, abdominal pain Reduced number of blood cells that fight infections or help your blood to clot - symptoms include: fever, chills, sore throat or generally feeling unwell, or easy or unusual bruising or bleeding Changes in vision, eye pain	Tell your doctor immediately
Stomach upset	Tell your doctor if troublesome
Change in colour of body fluids e.g. urine, sweat, tears (red/orange)	This is harmless. Soft contact lenses may be stained.

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

Other information:

- Limit alcohol intake while taking *rifabutin*. Alcohol may increase the risk of liver problems.
- You will need regular blood tests while taking *rifabutin* to check if it is causing problems with your liver.
- Some contraceptives may not work as well while you are taking *rifabutin*, and for 4 weeks after stopping. Discuss with your doctor or pharmacist.