

# Darunavir (Prezista)<sup>®</sup>

This leaflet is designed to give you a general idea of the most important things you need to know about your new medicine. It is designed to be read alongside the patient information leaflet that comes with the medicine. If you have any questions or are unsure about anything, ask your doctor, pharmacist or nurse.

## **What is darunavir?**

Darunavir belongs to a group of drugs called protease inhibitors, often referred to as 'PIs'.

Darunavir is used in combination with other anti-HIV drugs for the treatment of HIV.

Darunavir needs to be taken with a 'booster' drug called ritonavir or cobicistat, which increase the level of darunavir in your body but do not have an anti-HIV effect themselves. Without ritonavir or cobicistat, darunavir will not be effective at controlling the virus.

Please speak to your clinic doctor or pharmacist if you would like more information about how these drugs work.

## **How should I take darunavir?**

- There are different doses of darunavir. The most common dose is one 800mg tablet to be taken with one ritonavir 100mg tablet or one cobicistat 150mg tablet once daily.
- Some people require a different dose of darunavir which needs to be taken twice daily. If you are uncertain about your dose always check with your doctor or pharmacist.
- Darunavir in combination with either ritonavir or cobicistat should be taken within 30 minutes of eating a meal or snack. The type of food is not important.
- If you vomit within 2 hours of taking your darunavir tablet, you will need to take another tablet and then take the next dose as usual.

## **What are the common side effects with darunavir?**

Like all other medicines, darunavir has some side effects. Most of these are minor and will settle within a few days or weeks. Make sure you read the leaflet that came with darunavir for a complete list. Some examples of most common side effects are listed below;

- 'Stomach' side effects: Feeling sick (nausea), vomiting, diarrhoea, pain or swelling of the belly, indigestion.
- 'Head' side effects: Headache, dizziness insomnia.
- Changes in blood test: Changes in some of your liver or kidney tests, or changes in cholesterol.
- Other side effects: Rash, itching (pruritus).

If you experience any side effects that are troubling you or you develop any new symptoms after you start darunavir, tell your clinic who will tell you what to do.

If you decide to stop taking darunavir, it is important that you tell your doctor before you do. He or she can discuss other treatment options with you and advise you how to stop the tablets safely.

If you have a question about darunavir or any of your medicines, speak to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse.

Contact:

Telephone:

This information was prepared by the HIV Pharmacy Association (HIVPA). This leaflet does not replace the patient information leaflet issued with the medicines listed, but should be read in conjunction with them. This leaflet should only be distributed to people already taking or who are thinking of taking the listed medicine(s). This leaflet does not constitute any endorsement of the use of the listed medicine(s) by HIVPA and is intended for information purposes only. Prepared October 2017

This leaflet and its contents are covered by the Terms and Conditions as stated on the HIVPA website.

## What medicines should I avoid with darunavir?

It is important to make your doctor and pharmacist aware of any medicines you take, including herbal, complementary or other medicines you may buy from the pharmacy or online, to ensure that they are compatible with darunavir. Make sure you read the patient information leaflet you received with darunavir which states a full list. Always tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking any of the following before you take either darunavir or the new medicine:

Medicine	Why do your doctor & pharmacist need to know about this?
Cholesterol medicines called statins	Some statins are affected by darunavir which may lead to more side effects. Your clinic doctor will help choose the right statin for you.
Inhalers or nasal sprays	Some inhalers and nasal sprays contain steroids (such as Flixonase and Seretide) which can build up in your body if taken with darunavir, leading to side effects. Your clinic pharmacist or doctor will be able to advise you on alternative options.
St John's wort for depression	This can reduce the levels of darunavir within your body, meaning it may be less effective at suppressing the virus and so is not recommended to be taken with darunavir.

### What if I:

#### **Get a headache or just need a pain killer?**

Paracetamol can be taken with darunavir. Ibuprofen can also be taken, as long as you do not have any problems such as stomach ulcers or asthma, or unless your doctor has advised you to avoid NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) for any reason.

#### **Get hayfever or have other allergies?**

The antihistamines cetirizine, loratadine and chlorphenamine can be taken with darunavir. If your allergy is related to darunavir (such as rash) or any other medicines, speak to your doctor or pharmacist before taking any medicines. You should speak to your doctor or pharmacist before using any nasal sprays or getting any injections to check for possible interactions with darunavir and any other medicines you are taking.

#### **Get diarrhoea?**

For short-term diarrhoea relief, you can use loperamide. Remember to drink plenty of fluids. If you get a lot of diarrhoea and it lasts more than a few days, contact your clinic to ask for advice.

#### **Get heartburn, reflux, indigestion or need medicines for stomach ulcers?**

All stomach medicines can be taken with darunavir including antacids (indigestion remedies) and proton pump inhibitors (used to treat stomach acids).

#### **Currently take, or would like to take supplements, including calcium or iron?**

Most supplements can be taken with darunavir, but always check with your doctor or pharmacist before taking them.

#### **Am prescribed or take something for my mood, such as an antidepressant or St. John's wort?**

Check with your clinic doctor or pharmacist before taking these as some cannot be taken with darunavir. See note above.

#### **What if I miss my darunavir!**

Anti-HIV drugs work best if there is a constant amount of the drugs in your body. It is really important that you take them regularly. However, occasionally you may forget a dose. Do not worry if this happens, just follow the guidance below. If you are having problems remembering to take your medicines, speak with your clinic now and they may be able to help you.

- If you notice **within 12 hours** of the time you usually take darunavir, you must take the tablet as soon as possible. Always take the tablet with food. Then take the next dose as usual.
- If you notice **12 hours or more after** the time you usually take darunavir, then do not take the missed dose. Wait and take the next dose, with food, at your usual time.

This information was prepared by the HIV Pharmacy Association (HIVPA). This leaflet does not replace the patient information leaflet issued with the medicines listed, but should be read in conjunction with them. This leaflet should only be distributed to people already taking or who are thinking of taking the listed medicine(s). This leaflet does not constitute any endorsement of the use of the listed medicine(s) by HIVPA and is intended for information purposes only. Prepared October 2017.

This leaflet and its contents are covered by the Terms and Conditions as stated on the HIVPA website.