

Ritonavir | (generic)

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 not supposed to replace the manufacturer's leaflet that comes with the medicine but is intended to be read alongside it. After reading this leaflet if you have any questions please ask your clinic team.

Clinic contact details:

What is ritonavir?

Ritonavir is a medicine is used in combination with other medicines for the treatment of HIV. Ritonavir is always taken with another protease inhibitor as it is used as a 'pharmacokinetic enhancer' to boost levels of protease inhibitors in your body. Without ritonavir, other protease inhibitors may not be effective at controlling the virus.

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

How should I take ritonavir?

- There are a number of different doses of ritonavir. The most common dose is one 100mg tablet taken once daily with food. Sometimes ritonavir is taken twice daily, or at higher doses.
- The dose depends on which protease inhibitor you are taking it with.
- There are no specific types or amounts of food that need to be taken with ritonavir. You can take ritonavir with a substantial snack, or up to 30 minutes after a main meal.
- When taking ritonavir to 'boost' the levels of another protease inhibitor, the two drugs must be taken at the same time each day.

What if I miss a dose?

HIV medicines work best if there is a constant amount of the medicine in your body. If you are worried about forgetting to take your medicines, speak to your clinic team.

Occasionally you may forget a dose. If this happens, please follow the guidance below and speak with your clinic as soon as possible for advice.



- If you take ritonavir **ONCE** daily and you notice a missed dose **within 12 hours** of the time you usually take it, then take the dose as soon as possible. Take the next dose at your usual time. Always take the ritonavir with your other protease inhibitor. If you notice **12 hours or more after** the time you usually take ritonavir, then wait and take the dose at the usual time.
- If you take ritonavir **TWICE** a day and notice the missed dose **within 6 hours** of the time you usually take ritonavir: take the dose as soon as possible. Take the next dose at your usual time.

Always take the ritonavir with your other protease inhibitor. If you **notice 6 hours or more after** the time you usually take ritonavir then wait and take the dose at the usual time.

- Never take a double dose to make up for the missed one.

What are the common side effects with ritonavir?

If you experience any side effects, and either they are troubling you or you develop any new symptoms after you start ritonavir, do not stop taking your medication, instead please contact your clinic team so they can discuss other treatment options with you and/or advise you how to stop safely.

Some examples of the most common side effects are listed below (for a full list of side effects please check the manufacturer information leaflet):



'Stomach' side effects: feeling sick (nausea), vomiting, diarrhoea, abdominal (tummy) pain and indigestion, flatulence and mouth ulcer



'Head' side effects: headache, dizziness, tiredness, blurred vision or a tingling sensation or numbness in the hands, feet, or numbness in hands around lips/mouth



Other side effects: rash, itching, flushing, feeling hot, throat pain, cough, joint and back pain, changes in liver or kidney tests or changes in cholesterol levels.

Can I take HIV medication if I'm pregnant or breastfeeding?

If you become pregnant or are planning to start a family, do not stop taking your medication. Speak to your clinic so that your care can be managed appropriately. It is important you are on effective treatment to reduce the risk to your unborn child.

What medicines should I avoid with ritonavir?

It is important that you tell anyone prescribing for you about any medicines you are taking. This includes prescribed medicines, recreational or party drugs, and/or supplements you buy over the counter. Always tell your clinic team if you are taking any of the following (note this is not an exhaustive list of medicines):

Medicine	Why you need to know?
St John's Wort (a herbal remedy used to treat depression) Anti-TB drugs: Rifampicin & rifabutin Anti-seizure medicines e.g. carbamazepine (also used to treat pain) Treatment for prostate cancer: Enzalutamide	Do not use these drugs as they can reduce the levels of rilpivirine in the body and can cause it to stop working properly. Do not start taking these medicines and inform your doctor.
Steroid containing medicines including inhalers, nasal sprays, eyedrops, creams, ointments or injections	Steroid containing products can interact with ritonavir and can build up in your body leading to side effects. For example, creams and ointments, eye drops, inhalers and nasal sprays which contain steroids such fluticasone, can interact with ritonavir. Your clinic will be able to advise you about alternative options. Please ask your clinic pharmacist for a copy of the HIVPA steroid interaction card which provides

	further information on specific examples of steroid preparations.
Anticoagulants (e.g. rivaroxaban) and antiplatelets (e.g. clopidogrel, ticagrelor)	The levels of some anticoagulants and antiplatelets in your blood are changed by ritonavir, and therefore these medicines should not be taken together. Your clinic team will need to know if you are taking any anticoagulants or antiplatelets before prescribing ritonavir.
Statins (cholesterol-lowering medicines)	Some statins are affected by ritonavir which may lead to more side effects. Your clinic doctor will help choose the right statin for you.
Hormonal contraceptives (birth control)	Some HIV medicines reduce the effectiveness of contraceptives and some can increase levels which can increase the likelihood of side-effects. Please speak with your clinic about the best options for you.
Recreational/party drugs	Ritonavir interacts with many recreational/party drugs which can be dangerous. If you take/use any recreational/party drug please discuss this with your clinical team.

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