

EFAVIRENZ (SUSTIVA®)

Tablet : 600 mg
Capsules : 50, 100 and 200 mg



How do these medications work?

Efavirenz is an antiretroviral drug that acts by preventing multiplication of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

Efavirenz is a non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor. It inhibits reverse transcriptase action when the virus enters the host cell. The virus needs reverse transcriptase to multiply in the body.

Efavirenz is used in combination with other antiretroviral drugs to slow the progression of the disease and reduce the risk of opportunistic infections (AIDS-related infections).

Efavirenz does not cure AIDS nor kill the virus. There is a permanent risk of transmitting HIV either through sexual or blood contact. It is therefore essential that precautions always be taken (latex condoms, clean syringes, etc.).

Fertile women must use an effective means of birth control.

How do I take this medication?

Efavirenz
1 tablet of 600 mg
Once daily at bedtime
<input type="checkbox"/> other dosage: _____

Efavirenz may be taken **with or without food**. However, avoid taking efavirenz with a meal rich in fat.

Take efavirenz at bedtime to reduce side effects during the day. If you have nightmares, take your medication at supper-time. The presence of fat increases the absorption of efavirenz and could increase the risk of experiencing adverse effects.

If you have a hangover effect in the morning or have difficulty sleeping at night, take the dose with dinner (meal low in fat).

It is important to take your antiretroviral medicine properly - i.e. never forget a dose, follow the instructions on how to take the medicine, and always keep on with your treatment.

It is important to take efavirenz regularly, at the same time each day, and to keep to this schedule as closely as possible. Adherence to therapy will help prevent resistance (HIV's ability to recognize and defeat the effect of the medication) and avoid treatment failure (loss of efficacy of the antiretroviral treatment), which would result in an increased viral load and a lower number of CD4 cells, which are the ones that help your body fight infection.

Nearly everyone tends to relax their compliance with the treatment at some point. The key to success is motivation. Don't hesitate to consult members of your care team so that they can explain the benefits of the treatment you are having. They can also suggest ways that will help you maintain it properly.

Unless you are having serious side effects, never stop your treatment without first speaking to your doctor.

Can I take Efavirenz with my other medications?

• St. John's wort

St. John's wort can decrease the efficacy of efavirenz and possibly allow the virus to develop resistance. Do not take St. John's wort while you are taking efavirenz.

The list of medications you should avoid is long and subject to change. Consult your doctor or pharmacist before taking any new medication (prescription or non-prescription).



What are the side effects of these medications?

Normal reactions which will disappear or can be treated

Continue the medication

- Drowsiness, dizziness
- Difficulty sleeping
- Impaired concentration
- Abnormal dreams
- Hangover effect in the morning



Contact your doctor

Continue the medication

- Rash alone (redness on the skin)



See your doctor **IMMEDIATELY**

Rash with:

- Fever, ulcers in the mouth
- Swelling, blistering (bubbles on the skin)
- Eye redness
- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea
- Muscle and joint pain
- Severe fatigue



Keep your doctor or pharmacist informed of any side effect causing discomfort so they can help you deal with it.

What if I forget to take a dose?

Take the dose you missed as soon as possible and then continue with your regular schedule.

However, if it's nearly time to take the following dose, do not take the missed dose and just take the following one at the usual time. **Do not double up doses.**



Can I drink alcohol with Efavirenz?

Avoid excessive or regular consumption of alcohol (beer, wine or hard liquor), which can increase the risk of hepatitis (liver inflammation) or interact with some of your medications.



However, do not miss a dose of your medication because you want to have an alcoholic drink. Unless your doctor tells you otherwise, reasonable (social) consumption should not damage your health.

General advice

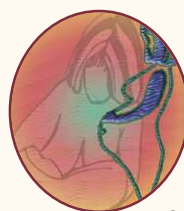
Always keep your appointments with your doctor and the care team so that your health can be closely monitored.

If you have any questions about your medications or need help to schedule when to take them, please contact your doctor or pharmacist, who is familiar with what you are taking.

Contact person : _____

Telephone : _____

What if I'm pregnant or breast-feeding?



Pregnant women should not take efavirenz. Talk to your doctor as soon as possible if you are pregnant or want to become pregnant. Fertile women must use an effective means of birth control.

Since the virus can be transmitted through maternal milk, breast-feeding is not recommended in HIV-positive women.

Storage

Keep efavirenz in a dry place at room temperature (15-30 ° C or 59-86 ° F).



Avoid storage in bathroom.

Keep this medication in a secure container and out of reach from children.