



# Lamivudine (3TC®, Heptovir)

Tablets: 150 or 300 mg | Oral solution: 10 mg/mL  
Heptovir : 100 mg tablet

## How does this medication work?

Lamivudine or 3TC is an antiretroviral drug that acts by preventing multiplication of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or hepatitis B virus.

Lamivudine is a nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor. It acts by inhibiting the reverse transcriptase enzyme. The virus needs this enzyme to multiply in the body.

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

Lamivudine 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?

Lamivudine	
___	tablet(s) of 100 mg
___	tablet(s) of 150 mg
___	tablet(s) of 300 mg
<b>or</b>	
___	mL ___ daily
___	time(s) a day

Lamivudine may be taken **with or without food**.

It is important not to forget 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 lamivudine 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 physician.*

**Your hepatitis can get worse if you are a hepatitis B carrier and stop taking lamivudine. Lamivudine also treats hepatitis B.**

## Can I take Lamivudine with my other medications?

Consult your doctor or pharmacist before taking any new prescription or non-prescription medication, natural product or recreational drug.

## Advice about the oral solution

Lamivudine oral solution contains a negligible amount of alcohol which should have no effect whatsoever.

If you are diabetic, you should note that lamivudine oral solution contains 3 g of sugar or carbohydrate per 15 mL (1 tablespoon).



## What are the side effects of this medication?

Normal reactions which will disappear or can be treated

### Continue the medication

- Fatigue, headache
- Digestive problems
- Sleeping difficulties



**IMMEDIATELY** see your doctor if you experience:

- Lactic acidosis: nausea, vomiting, stomach pain, weight loss, severe fatigue, and difficulty breathing
- Pancreatitis: abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting

Lamivudine is an antiretroviral that is generally well tolerated.

Inform your doctor and pharmacist of any troublesome side effects. They can help you to manage them.

## 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 if I'm on Lamivudine?

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.

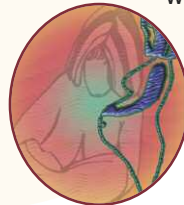


However, do not miss a dose of your medication because you want to have an alcoholic drink. Unless your doctor tells you otherwise, reasonable (social) consumption should not damage your health.

## What if I'm pregnant or breast-feeding?

Lamivudine can be taken during pregnancy.

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



## 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 : \_\_\_\_\_

## Storage

Lamivudine tablets should be stored in a dry place, at room temperature 2-30 °C (34 -86 °F).

Bottles of oral solution can be stored at room temperature between 2-25 °C (34 -77 °F).

Avoid storage in bathroom.



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