

Nelfinavir (Viracept®)

Tablets: 625 mg



How does this medication work?

Nelfinavir is an antiretroviral drug that acts by preventing multiplication of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). Nelfinavir is a viral protease inhibitor. It inhibits viral replication by preventing synthesis of new active copies virus.

Nelfinavir 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).

Nelfinavir 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?

Nelfinavir

2 tablets of 625 mg

Twice a day

Nelfinavir must be taken with a fat meal or a snack containing at least 125 calories. Food intake with nelfinavir improves its absorption and effectiveness.

Swallow the whole tablet of nelfinavir, do not chew or crush. Nelfinavir tablets may be dissolved in water and then mixed with a milk product or pudding. Nelfinavir must not be dissolved in or taken with an acidic juice (apple, orange, tomato), because it will result in a bitter taste.

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 nelfinavir 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.

What if I forget to take a dose ?

Take the dose you missed as soon as possible 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 take Nelfinavir with my other medications?

• Oral contraceptives ("the pill")

Nelfinavir can decrease the efficacy of oral contraceptives. Additional protective measures, such as latex condoms, are recommended.

• St. John's wort

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



Nelfinavir can interact with a number of other drugs.

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



What are the side effects of this medication ?

Normal reactions which will disappear or can be treated
Continue the medication

- Diarrhea, gas
- Nausea, vomiting
- Decreased appetite

Contact your physician
Continue the medication

- **Rash** (redness on the skin) only



IMMEDIATELY see your physician

Rash WITH

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

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

Can I drink alcohol if I'm on Nelfinavir ?

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.

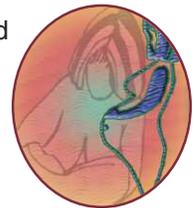
Contact person : _____

Phone : _____

What if I'm pregnant or breast-feeding ?

The effect of nelfinavir in pregnant women is not yet known. Talk to your doctor if you want to take nelfinavir and are pregnant or want to become pregnant.

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



Storage

Keep nelfinavir 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.