

# Nevirapine (Viramune<sup>®</sup>, Viramune XR<sup>®</sup>)

Tablet: 200 mg  
Tablet: 400 mg long-acting



## How does this medication work?

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

Nevirapine is a non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor. It acts by inhibiting the reverse transcriptase action when the virus enters the host cell. The virus needs reverse transcriptase to multiply in the body.

Nevirapine 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).

Nevirapine 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?

### Nevirapine

From \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ one 200 mg tablet once a day

Thereafter \_\_\_\_\_ tablet(s) of 200 mg \_\_\_\_\_ time(s) a day

**OR**

1 tablet (long-acting tablet) once a day

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

To minimize the risk of skin rash, your doctor will prescribe nevirapine 200 mg once a day for the first 14 days. If a rash occurs during this period, you must wait until the lesions have disappeared before increasing the dose.

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 nevirapine 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.

*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 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.



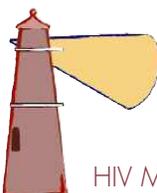
**Do not double up doses.**

## Can I take Nevirapine with my other medications?

### • Oral contraceptives ("the pill")

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

Nevirapine can lessen the efficacy of a number of 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 ?

Contact your doctor  
**Continue the medication**



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

N.B. If the rash presents itself in the first 14 days of treatment, wait until it clears up before increasing the administration of nevirapine to twice daily.

**IMMEDIATELY** see your doctor



Rash **WITH**

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

**Hepatitis (liver inflammation):**

Abnormal weakness, nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite, dark urine, pale stools.

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

**Medical follow-up:** Through regular blood test your doctor will monitor your liver.

## Can I drink alcohol if I'm on Nevirapine ?

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.

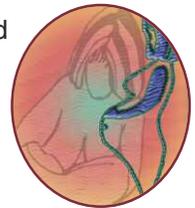
Contact person : \_\_\_\_\_

Phone : \_\_\_\_\_

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

The effect of nevirapine in pregnant women is not yet known. Talk to your doctor if you want to take nevirapine 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 nevirapine 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.