

Abacavir / Lamivudine (Kivexa®)

600 mg of abacavir and 150 mg of lamivudine



How does this medication work ?

Kivexa® is a combination of two antiretroviral drugs: abacavir and lamivudine. They act by preventing multiplication of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or the hepatitis B virus.

Abacavir and lamivudine are nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors. They act by inhibiting the reverse transcriptase enzyme. The virus needs reverse trans-cryptase to multiply in the body.

Kivexa® 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).

Kivexa® 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 ?

Kivexa®

1 tablet
(abacavir 600 mg and lamivudine 300 mg)

once daily

Kivexa® may be taken **with or without food**.

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 Kivexa® 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. 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 experiencing a severe adverse effect, never stop your treatment without first speaking to your doctor.

Your hepatitis can get worst if you are a hepatitis B carrier and stop taking Kivexa®. The lamivudine component of Kivexa® also treats hepatitis B.

What if I forget to take a dose ?

The day of the missed dose :

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

The day after the missed dose :

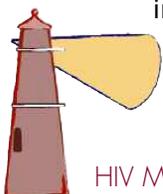
Do not take the missed dose and continue your regular schedule.

Do not double up doses.



Can I take Kivexa® with other medications?

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

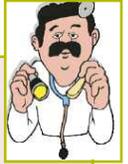


What are the side effects of this medication?



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

- Fatigue
- Difficulty sleeping
- Gastrointestinal effects



See your doctor **IMMEDIATELY.**

Your doctor may need to **permanently stop Kivexa®**

Hypersensitivity reaction to abacavir:

Rash alone or symptoms from 2 of the following groups:

- 1) Fever
- 2) Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain
- 3) Severe fatigue, general illness
- 4) Sore throat, shortness of breath, cough

Never take Kivexa® again nor any medication containing abacavir like Ziagen and Trizivir if you had an hypersensitivity reaction.

If you think that you may have an allergic reaction to Kivexa®, **consult your doctor.**

N.B. If you stop taking your medication by yourself due to side effects or a disease, consult your doctor before restarting Kivexa®. Your doctor will insure that your symptoms are not related to an allergic reaction. If you had an hypersensitivity reaction, never take Kivexa® again nor any medication containing abacavir like Ziagen and Trizivir

Lactic acidosis:

- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Stomach pain
- Weight loss
- Severe fatigue
- Difficulty breathing

Can I drink alcohol if I'm on Kivexa®?

Alcohol can increase the effects of Kivexa®. Avoid excessive or regular consumption of alcohol (beer, wine or hard liquor); alcohol can 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.

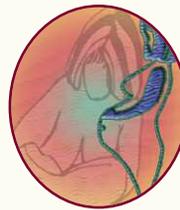
If you have any questions about your medications or need help to schedule when to take them, please contact your doctor or pharmacist, who is familiar with what you are taking.

Contact person : _____

Telephone : _____

What if I'm pregnant or breast-feeding ?

The effect of Kivexa® in pregnant women is not yet known.



Talk to your doctor if you want to take Kivexa® 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 Kivexa® in a dry place at room temperature (15-30°C or 59-86°F). Avoid storage in bathrooms.



Keep out of sight and reach of children.