



**How does this medication work?**

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

Abacavir is used in combination with other antiretroviral drugs to slow progression of the disease. It helps to keep your immune system strong and reduces the risk of developing infections that occur when the immune system is weak (opportunistic infections).

Abacavir 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 (use latex condoms, do not share syringes).



**What if I forget taking a dose?**

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



However, if it is nearly time for your next dose, do not take the missed dose and continue with your regular schedule. **Do not double up doses.**

**Stopping abacavir**

If you stop taking abacavir by yourself due to side effects or a disease, consult your doctor before restarting treatment. Your doctor will ensure that your symptoms are not related to an allergic reaction.

**Can I take abacavir with other medications?**

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



**Can I drink alcohol or take drugs if I'm on abacavir ?**

Alcohol can increase the side effects of abacavir. Avoid regular alcohol consumption which may damage your liver, especially if you are a hepatitis carrier. Reasonable consumption should not harm your health.



However, do not miss a dose of your medication because you take alcohol or drugs.

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

We do not yet know the effects of abacavir in pregnant women. Talk to your doctor if you want to take abacavir and are pregnant or want to become pregnant. Breast-feeding is not recommended in HIV-positive women.



**How to take this medication?**

**Abacavir**

\_\_\_ 300 mg tablet (s) or \_\_\_ mL (20 mg/mL)

\_\_\_ times a day

Abacavir may be taken with or without food.

It is important not to forget to take doses of your antiretroviral medication; otherwise, the virus may become **resistant**. The medication will lose its effect on the virus, and the treatment will no longer be effective.



Unless you have serious side effects (see section on **side effects**), *never stop your treatment without first speaking to your doctor.*

**What are the side effects of this medication?**

Normal reactions which will disappear or can be treated. <b>Continue the medication</b>	- Headaches, fatigue, nausea
 <p>See your doctor <b>IMMEDIATELY</b></p> <p>Your doctor may need to stop abacavir permanently. Never retake abacavir or other medications containing abacavir (example: Kivexa®, Trizivir™).</p>	<p><b>Skin rash</b> alone or symptoms in 2 or more of the following groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- fever</li> <li>- nausea, vomiting, diarrhea</li> <li>- severe fatigue, general discomfort</li> <li>- sore throat, shortness of breath, cough</li> </ul> <p><b>Lactic acidosis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Nausea, vomiting, stomach pains</li> <li>- Weight loss, severe fatigue</li> <li>- Difficulty breathing, irregular heartbeat</li> </ul>

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

**Storage**

Avoid storage in bathrooms.

Keep abacavir tablets and oral solution in a dry place at room temperature. Keep out of the sight and reach of children.



**General advice**

Always keep your appointments with your doctor and care team, so that your health status can be closely monitored, even if you have no symptoms.

If you think that you may have an allergic reaction to abacavir, consult your doctor.

