



How does this medication work?

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

Atazanavir 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).

Atazanavir 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.**



Can I take atazanavir with other medications?

Atazanavir can interact with some medications. Consult your doctor or pharmacist before taking any new medication, natural product or recreational drug.

Do not take atazanavir with other medications which affect the acidity of the stomach such as Maalox®, Diovol®, Pepcid®, Zantac 75®, etc. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist before taking any drugs for your stomach acidity. Do not take St. John's wort while you are taking atazanavir. If you are also taking Viagra®, Cialis®, or Levitra®, the dose of these medications should be reduced.



Avoid consumption of grapefruit juice.

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

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 medications because you take alcohol or drugs.



What if I'm pregnant or breast-feeding ?

We still do not know the effects of atazanavir in pregnant women. Talk to your doctor if you want to take atazanavir and are pregnant or want to become pregnant.

Breast-feeding is not recommended in HIV-positive women.



How do I take this medication?

Atazanavir

2 capsules of 200 mg

Once a day

Atazanavir must be taken **with food** (light meal or snack), at the same time every day, about every 24 hours.

Do not open the capsules. **Swallow them whole.**

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.



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. Continue the medication	- Stomach pain - Nausea, diarrhea - Headache
	Contact your doctor Continue the medication	- Yellowing skin and eyes - Rash only
	See your doctor IMMEDIATELY	<u>Rash WITH:</u> - Fever, mouth ulcers - Swelling, blisters - Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea - Muscle and joint pains <u>Effects on the heart:</u> - Dizziness, palpitations or irregular heart beat <u>Kidney stones:</u> - pain in the back or side, blood in urine, pain when urinating

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

Storage

Avoid storage in wet areas such as bathroom. Keep atazanavir 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.

