

EFAVIRENZ (Sustiva®)



How do this medication work?

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

Efavirenz 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).

Efavirenz 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 to take your next dose, do not take the missed dose and just take the following dose at the usual time. **Do not double up doses.**



Be careful mixing medication!

Efavirenz can reduce the effectiveness of many medications.

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

Do not take St. John's wort while you are taking efavirenz.



Can I drink alcohol or take drugs if I am on efavirenz?

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

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



How do I take this medication ?

Efavirenz

1 tablet of 600 mg once a day before bed
Or _____

- Efavirenz may be taken **with or without food** but avoid food rich in fat. Take efavirenz before bed in order to minimize its side effects during the day.
- If you have a hangover effect in the morning or have difficulty sleeping at night, take the dose with dinner (meal low in fat).

It is important to take your antiretroviral medicine properly and never forget a dose. 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, never stop your treatment without first speaking to your doctor.

What are the side effects of this medication?

 <p>Normal reactions which will disappear or can be treated. Continue the medication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drowsiness, dizziness - Difficulty sleeping - Impaired concentration - Abnormal dreams - Hangover effect in the morning
 <p>Contact your doctor Continue the medication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rash alone (redness on the skin)
 <p>See your doctor IMMEDIATELY</p>	<p>Rash with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fever, ulcers in the mouth - Swelling, blistering (bubbles on the skin) - Eye redness - Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea - Muscle and joint pain - Severe fatigue

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

Storage

Avoid storage in the bathroom.

Keep efavirenz in a dry place and at room temperature.

Keep out of 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.

