

# DELAVIRDINE

**Other NAMES:** Rescriptor®

## WHY is this drug prescribed?

Delavirdine is an antiretroviral (anti-HIV) drug that is part of the non nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor (NNRTIs or Non Nukes) family. It is used together with other antiretrovirals to delay the progression of HIV infection. By doing this, your immune system should improve (increase in CD4<sup>+</sup> count) and you will be better protected against infections.

Delavirdine does not cure AIDS or completely kill the HIV virus, but helps to prevent further damage by slowing down the production of new viruses. Treatment with delavirdine does not reduce the risk of passing infection on to others. You will still be able to pass HIV by sexual contact, by blood transfer or by sharing needles. You should always use appropriate precautions to prevent passing HIV on to others.

## HOW should this drug be taken?

Generally, the dose of delavirdine is 400 mg (4 tablets) three times daily or 600 mg (6 tablets) twice daily. Delavirdine can be taken with or without food.

Delavirdine tablets should be swallowed whole with water. If you have problems swallowing the tablets, delavirdine tablets can be placed in a glass of water. Wait for the tablets to dissolve, then stir the water and drink. Rinse the glass with a bit of

water and drink to ensure that the drug does not remain in the glass.

Your dosage is:

100 mg tablet:

\_\_\_\_ tablets (\_\_\_\_mg) \_\_\_\_ times a day

## What should you do if you FORGET a dose?

If you miss a dose of delavirdine, take it as soon as possible. However, if it is time for your next dose, do not double the dose, just carry on with your regular schedule.

## Why should you not forget to take this drug?

If you miss doses of delavirdine, the amount of HIV virus in your blood (known as the viral load) will start increasing again and your immune system will be further damaged. A few missed doses can be enough for delavirdine to stop being active. A phenomenon known as **resistance**. When this happens, other antiretrovirals that work in a similar way as delavirdine may also become inactive. **Therefore, missing doses of delavirdine can decrease treatment options for the future.** Please do not stop delavirdine without talking to your doctor first.

## What ADVERSE EFFECTS can this drug cause? What should you do about them?

The most common adverse effect of delavirdine is a mild rash. Tell your doctor

immediately if you develop a rash while taking delavirdine. In most cases, the rash can be treated with anti-inflammatory drugs or antihistamines. Consult your doctor or pharmacist before taking any medications to treat the rash.

If you develop a severe rash, or a rash with symptoms such as fever, blistering, mouth sores, red eyes, swelling, muscle or joint aches and a general feeling of being unwell, STOP taking delavirdine. **Speak with your doctor immediately.**

Other common adverse effects include headache, nausea, diarrhea, sedation and fatigue. Your blood tests will also be checked for any changes in liver function.

**It is important that you keep your doctor appointments and come for your laboratory tests so that your progress can be followed.**

## What other PRECAUTIONS should you follow while using this drug?

You must make sure that you are taking the right dose. If you take higher doses of delavirdine than what is prescribed, you may increase the chance of having adverse effects. If you take lower doses of delavirdine than what is prescribed, the HIV virus may become resistant to delavirdine.

Certain drugs can increase or decrease the effect of delavirdine. Also, delavirdine might influence the effect of other drugs you are taking. Inform your doctor and pharmacist of all prescribed and non-prescribed drugs you are taking. As well, you should inform them of natural products you are taking. If

you wish to start a new drug or natural product, please consult with your pharmacist before doing so.

The doses of certain drugs may need to be decreased if you are taking delavirdine.

Delavirdine should not be taken at the same time as antacids such as TUMS™, Rolaids™, Maalox™, etc. Instead, take delavirdine 1 hour before taking antacids.

Also, drugs such as ranitidine (Zantac®), famotidine (Pepcid®), omeprazole (Losec®), lansoprazole (Prevacid®), pantoprazole (Pantoloc®) and rabeprazole (Pariet®) may decrease the absorption and activity of delavirdine. Talk to your pharmacist or doctor if you are taking one of these drugs.

You should also **NOT** take delavirdine with:

- Midazolam (Versed®)
- Pimozide (Orap®)
- Triazolam (Halcion®)

Please inform your doctor if you are pregnant. Your doctor can recommend the appropriate treatment to help reduce the risk of passing the HIV virus on to your baby. Breastfeeding is NOT recommended if you have HIV as you can transmit the virus to your baby through your breast milk.

### **How should this drug be STORED?**

Delavirdine should be stored in a cool (15-30°C) dry place, protected from light and well out of the reach of children. Ensure that the drug has not expired by checking the

expiry date (“EXP”) shown on the outside of the package.

Do not store in your bathroom or kitchen, as heat and moisture may cause the drug to be less active.

**If you have any questions or concerns about this drug or if you are experiencing adverse effects, please discuss them with your pharmacist, doctor or nurse.**

**Write questions or concerns down to ensure they are addressed.**

The following pharmacist is available to answer questions:

**Pharmacist:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

Reference: Product Monograph Rescriptor® (delavirdine). Kirkland, QC, Canada: Pfizer Canada Inc., 2003. Prepared by the Ontario HIV Pharmacy Professional Specialty Group, 2003. Reviewed 2009.

Additional medication fact sheets and updates may be found at: [www.hivclinic.ca](http://www.hivclinic.ca)

# ***DELAVIDINE***

## ***MEDICATION***

## ***FACT SHEET***