

# Dolutegravir

Medication Information Leaflet

## What is this medication for?

- Dolutegravir is an antiretroviral medication used to manage Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infection. It reduces the number of viruses (viral load) in the body by preventing the replication of viruses and keeps it at a low level.
- It is always given in combination with other antiretroviral medications (combination therapy).
- It may also be given as post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP), which is a short course of combination of different antiretroviral medications after a possible exposure to the virus. PEP should ideally be started within 72h after a possible exposure.

## How should I take/use this medication?

- This medication may be taken with or without food.
- This medication works best when the amount of medication in your body is kept at a constant level for the entire duration as prescribed. Do not stop taking this medication without the advice of your doctor. Remember to take it at the same time each day.

## What should I do if I forget to take/use this medication?

- It is important not to miss doses of this medication.
- If you forget to take this medication, the action to take depends on whether you are taking it for treatment or PEP.

### Treatment

- If you missed the dose for less than 12 hours, take the tablet as soon as possible. Then take the next dose at your usual time.
- If you missed the dose for 12 hours or more, skip the missed dose. Wait and take the next dose at your usual time.
- Do not double the next dose to make up for the missed dose.

### PEP

- If you missed a dose, take it as soon as you remember it.
- However, if it is time for your next dose, skip the missed dose. Wait and take the next dose at your usual time.

- Do not double the next dose to make up for the missed dose.

## **What precautions should I take?**

Inform your healthcare professional if:

- You have liver problems, including hepatitis B or C virus infection.
- You have kidney problems.
- You have any drug allergies.
- You are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or are breast-feeding.
  - Your doctor will discuss the benefits and risk of taking this medication in pregnancy, or where there is a need for contraception (e.g. condoms or hormonal contraception) to prevent pregnancy.

## **What are some common side-effects of this medication?**

If any of the following effects persist or are severe, consult your doctor.

- Nausea
- Diarrhea
- Headache
- Feeling tired or weak
- Having difficulty sleeping

## **What are some rare but serious side-effects that I need to seek medical advice immediately?**

Consult your doctor as soon as possible if any of these additional effects occur, as they may indicate more serious side effects:

- Symptoms of an allergic reaction
  - Itchy skin rashes over your whole body
  - Red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever
  - Swollen face/eyes/lips/tongue
  - Difficulty in breathing
- Symptoms of liver problems
  - Dark urine or light coloured stools, nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite, stomach pain, yellowing of your eyes or skin
- Muscle or joint pain
- Symptoms of mood changes
  - Feeling sad or hopeless
  - Feeling anxious or restless
  - Have thoughts of hurting yourself or have tried to hurt yourself
- Symptoms of infection (if you use Dolutegravir for PEP)
  - fever, sore throat, weakness, cough, or shortness of breath

## **What food or medication should I avoid when I take this medication?**

- If you are taking antacids or other products that contain metallic ingredients (iron, aluminium, calcium, magnesium, etc.), you should take Dolutegravir at least 2 hours before or 6 hours after antacids and these products.
- Inform your healthcare professional if:
  - You are taking other medications, especially Dofetilide, Fampridine, Metformin, Efavirenz, Etravirine, Fosamprenavir/Ritonavir, Tipranavir/Ritonavir, Nevirapine, Rifampicin, Carbamazepine, Oxcarbazepine, Phenobarbital, Phenytoin or St John's wort.
  - You are taking over-the-counter medications, including vitamins, minerals, traditional medications and herbal products.

## **How should I store this medication?**

Store in a cool and dry place, away from direct sunlight. Keep this medication away from children.

## How should I throw away this medication safely?

Pack this medication into a black trash bag and seal it tightly before throwing it into the rubbish chute or bin.

### Disclaimers

If you take more than the recommended dose, please seek medical advice immediately. The information provided on this page does not replace information from your healthcare professional. Please consult your healthcare professional for more information.

*This article is jointly developed by members of the National Medication Information workgroup. The workgroup consists of cluster partners (National Healthcare Group, National University Health System and SingHealth), community pharmacies (Guardian, Unity and Watsons) and Pharmaceutical Society of Singapore. The content does not reflect drug availability and supply information in pharmacies and healthcare institutions. You are advised to check with the respective institutions for such information.*

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