

Epzicom® [ep' zih com] (abacavir/lamivudine)



There are five classes of HIV medications (meds). They will not prevent or cure HIV. They limit how the virus makes copies of itself in your body. Epzicom is in the class of meds called *nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors* (NRTIs or Nukes).

Who Should Take Epzicom?

Only adults over the age of 18 should use Epzicom.

Before you start Epzicom, tell your doctor if you:

- Have liver or kidney problems
- Are pregnant or breastfeed your baby

How Is Epzicom Taken?

- This drug is a pill that you take once a day.
- Epzicom may be taken with or without food.
- Do not take two pills to make up for a missed dose
- Take Epzicom each day, even if you feel well

Side Effects

It is common to have side effects when you start HIV treatment. Make sure your doctor knows about any allergies and side effects you have had to other meds. Your doctor may change the type and/or amount of your meds.

What are the common side effects of Epzicom?

- Sleep problems
- Depression
- Headache
- Feel tired
- Sick to your stomach
- Changes in how the body stores fat
- Fever

What are the severe and rare side effects of Epzicom?

- Lactic acidosis. This is a build up of lactic acid in the blood.
- Risk of heart disease
- Liver problems
- Allergy. These may happen in the first six weeks after you start treatment.
 - Call your doctor if you get a rash with fever, stomach pain or body aches.

If a person has an allergic reaction to Epzicom, he or she can never take this drug again.

Take your HIV treatment just how your doctor tells you. Do not miss any doses, even if you feel well. When the meds are in your body, they will help stop the HIV.

Bring all of your meds and any supplements to your doctor visits. A "Brown Bag Check-up" can also help your doctor keep your records up to date and help you get better quality care.

Call your doctor if you:

- Feel sick to your stomach or throw up
- Feel tired
- Have yellow skin or eyes
- Have itchy skin
- Have dark tea-colored pee

Always talk to your doctor before you stop any treatment they prescribe for you.

How Does Epzicom Mix with Other Meds?

You and your doctor should know all the kinds of meds that you take. When you take two or more meds it can cause a bad *interaction*. This means that the meds do not mix well. This can lead to harmful side effects and hurt your treatment.



Talk to your doctor if you take Epzicom and any of these meds at the same time:

- Ziagen® (abacavir)
- Epivir-HBV®
- Combivir®
- Trizivir®
- Atripla®
- Complera™
- Truvada®



For more information

Contact your Registered Nurse Care Manager, or call Positive Healthcare's Nurse Advice Line at: (800) 797-1717. Visit the Medication Guide on the FDA website at: <http://www.fda.gov>