Norvir® [NOR-VEER] (ritonavir)

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. Norvir is in the class of meds called *protease inhibitors* (PIs).

Who Should Take Norvir?

Any person who is one month old and older can take Norvir.

Older people who take Norvir are more likely to get liver, kidney, and heart problems when they take it.

Talk to your doctor if you take statins for high cholesterol or are in treatment for Hepatitis C. Norvir may not be right for you.

People who drink too much alcohol or have liver disease, diabetes, or hemophilia should talk to their doctors before they start Norvir.

How Is Norvir Taken?

- Norvir comes in pill and liquid form. Both are taken with food.
- Norvir can be taken either every 12 hours or once a day. Your doctor will tell you how often you should take this pill.
- It is best to take low-dose Norvir with a meal or light snack.
- Liquid Norvir can be mixed with certain foods to make it taste better. Talk to your doctor about which foods are best to mix. It should be mixed one dose at a time. The whole dose should be kept at room temperature and taken within an hour.
- Norvir soft gel capsules should be kept cold. They can be kept at room temperature if you will use them in 30 days or less.
- Norvir tablets should be stored at room temperature.

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 Norvir?

- Feel weak, dizzy or have headaches
- Feel sick to your stomach or throw up
- Loose stool
- Not hungry
- Changes in where fat is stored in the body
- Changes in the sense of taste

What are the severe and rare side effects of Norvir?

- Swollen pancreas. Signs of this are severe stomach pain, sick to your stomach or throw up.
- Liver disease
- High blood sugar and diabetes
- High cholesterol and heart disease

Take your HIV meds 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.

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- People who have hemophilia can bleed

Some people are allergic to Norvir. See a doctor right away if you have any of these signs:

- Rash or hives
- Swollen tongue or lips
- Shortness of breath
- Hands, feet, or around the lips are numb or tingle
- Feel tired or not hungry
- Pain in the upper right part of the stomach
- Yellow skin or eyes.

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

How Does Norvir Mix with Other Meds?

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

Talk to your doctor if you take meds to treat:

- Allergies
- Acid reflux and heartburn
- High cholesterol
- Asthma or other lung problems
- If you bleed from the womb after child birth or an abortion
- Heart disease
- Heartbeat problems
- Swollen joints
- Migraines
- Pituitary disorders
- Bacterial infections
- Fungus or parasites
- Symptoms of Parkinson's disease
- Seizures, tremors or shakes
- Mental problems that come with age
- Depression. This includes St. John's Wort and products that contain it.
- Psychosis or anxiety
- Alcohol abuse
- Heroin withdrawal
- Problems with sex function

Also be careful if you mix Norvir with:

- Blood thinners or meds to stop blood clots
- Immune system suppressors
- Pain killers
- Birth control pills. A woman should use more than one form of birth control (like condoms) when she takes Norvir.

Tell your doctors and pharmacists all the meds you take. This includes over-the-counter meds and herbs.

For more information

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

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