

## HIV treatments information

### raltegravir



Raltegravir is an antiretroviral drug from the relatively new integrase inhibitor class. It is the only integrase inhibitor currently approved for use in Australia.

Integrase inhibitors target an enzyme called integrase which HIV uses to integrate its genetic code into human cells. Because this is a different point of action to that targeted by other [drug classes](#) A group of anti-HIV drugs with the same target of action. Anti-HIV drug classes include *nucleoside analogue reverse transcriptase inhibitors*, *protease inhibitors* and *non-nucleoside analogue reverse transcriptase inhibitors*, as well as several others. Combining drugs from three or more classes is the basis of Highly Active Antiretroviral Therapy (HAART)., there is a good chance that people who have failed several prior treatment regimens will benefit from this drug, especially if it is combined with an optimised background regimen.

#### About this treatment

Generic name:	raltegravir (RAL)
Pronunciation:	<i>ral-TEGG-ra-veer</i>
Brand name:	Isentress
Also known as:	MK-0518 (former code name)
Drug class:	integrase inhibitor
Availability in Australia:	

- **Available on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS)** through [S100 prescribers](#) since 2008.
- This drug may be available through clinical trials in Australia.
- You may be able to import this drug from overseas for your personal use.

Presentation:

400mg tablet

What the [treatment guidelines](#) say:

Raltegravir was approved for treatment as a first-line therapy in March 2010.

It is also a recommended option for people who experience antiretroviral treatment failure, especially for people who may have failed several prior regimens or who have few new treatment options remaining.

Links:

## raltegravir

From the NAPWA website at <http://www.napwa.org.au/rx/ii/raltegravir>

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<http://www.thebody.com/content/treat/art43550.html>  
<http://www.aidsmap.com/cms1315512.aspx>  
<http://www.pbs.gov.au/html/consumer/search/results?term=RALTEGRAVIR%20POTASSIUM&publication=HS>

## Taking it

Like all anti-HIV drugs, raltegravir must be taken in combination with other drugs to be completely effective. Your doctor will advise you on the right combination of drugs to suit your circumstances.

## Dosage

The usual adult dose is one 400mg tablet, taken twice a day.

Regardless of what you read on this website or elsewhere, you should always take your medications according to your doctor's instructions. If you're unsure, speak to your doctor or pharmacist.

## With or without food?

Raltegravir may be taken with or without food.

## Side effects

All drugs can produce side effects in some people. These may be mild, moderate or severe, so you should be aware of potential side effects before starting any drug, and speak to your doctor if you experience side effects that concern you.

- **Common side effects** may include nausea (upset stomach, feeling sick to the stomach), diarrhoea, headache..
  - **Less common side effects** may include fever, CPK elevation.
  - **Rare side effects** may include depression, abnormal liver function.
- It's unlikely you will experience all of these side effects, and you may not experience any side effects at all. Before starting any new drug, ask your doctor about side effects you might experience and discuss strategies for dealing with side effects if they do occur. If you experience any significant side effect you should continue taking your medicine and see your doctor as soon as possible.

## Interactions with other drugs

Raltegravir is broken down via a different method than most drugs, and so there are very few serious interactions with other anti-HIV drugs. Some evidence does exist that, when taken with tenofovir and ritonavir, levels of raltegravir in the blood may be reduced. When combined with atazanavir and ritonavir, blood levels of raltegravir may be increased.

Attachment	Size
<a href="#">mkcisent11208.pdf</a>	33.35 KB
<a href="#">PIIS0140673609613921.pdf</a>	206.82 KB