

ritonavir

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

HIV treatments information

ritonavir



Although it was originally developed for use as a protease inhibitor in its own right, today ritonavir is mainly used in low doses to boost the effect of other [protease inhibitors](#). A type of anti-HIV drug that works by preventing the production of an enzyme, protease, that HIV needs to replicate..

About this treatment

Generic name:

ritonavir (RTV)

Pronunciation:

ri-TON-aveer

Brand name:

Norvir

Also known as:

ABT-538 and A-84,538

Ritovir

Drug class:

protease inhibitor

Availability in Australia:

- **Available on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS)** through [S100 prescribers](#).
- 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:

100mg capsule; oral liquid

What the [treatment guidelines](#) say:

Capsules are best stored in a refrigerator but can be left at room temperature (up to 25°C) for up to 30 days

Links:

- <http://www.thebody.com/content/art1324.html>
- <http://www.aidsmap.com/cms1315534.aspx>
- <http://www.pbs.gov.au/html/consumer/search/results?medicine=%22RITONAVIR%22>

Taking it

Like all anti-HIV drugs, ritonavir must be taken in combination with other drugs to be completely effective. Commonly, ritonavir is combined with two nucleoside (NRTI) drugs, although other combinations are sometimes used. Your doctor will advise you on the right combination of drugs to suit your circumstances.

Dosage

ritonavir

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

Mainly used in small doses (100mg/200mg) in combination with other PIs

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?

Ritonavir should be taken with 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, vomiting, weakness, strange taste, numbness around mouth and extremities.
 - **Less common side effects** may include increased levels of blood sugar, increases in cholesterol and triglycerides (blood fats).
 - **Rare side effects** may include hepatitis.
- 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

Drugs to watch out for include other ARVs, drugs to treat tuberculosis, for erectile dysfunction (such as Viagra), for heart rhythm (antiarrhythmics) and for migraine headaches. Interactions are also possible with several antihistamines (allergy medications), sedatives, drugs to lower cholesterol and anti-fungal drugs. Ritonavir lowers blood levels of methadone. Watch for signs of excessive sedation if you take ritonavir with buprenorphine.

Ritonavir can boost the levels of certain recreational drugs, including methamphetamine, and the results can be dangerous. Some birth control pills may not work if you are taking ritonavir. The herb St. John's Wort lowers the blood levels of some protease inhibitors. Do not take it with ritonavir.

Attachment	Size
abcnorvi10706.pdf	32.44 KB