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Ziagen

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Description

Side Effects Trouble sleeping or loss of appetite may occur. If any of these effects last or get worse, tell your doctor or pharmacist promptly. Remember that this medication has been prescribed because your doctor has judged that the benefit to you is greater than the risk of side effects. Many people using this medication do not have serious side effects. As your immune system gets stronger, it can begin to fight off infections you already had, possibly causing disease symptoms to come back. You could also have symptoms if your immune system becomes overactive. This reaction may happen at any time (soon after starting HIV treatment or many months later). Get medical help right away if you have any serious symptoms, including: unexplained weight loss, severe tiredness, muscle aches/weakness that doesn't go away, headaches that are severe or don't go away, joint pain, numbness/tingling of the hands/feet/arms/legs, vision changes, signs of infection (such as fever, chills, swollen lymph nodes, trouble breathing, cough, non-healing skin sores), signs of an overactive thyroid (such as irritability, nervousness, heat intolerance, fast/pounding/irregular heartbeat, bulging eyes, unusual growth in the neck/thyroid known as a goiter), signs of a certain nerve problem known as Guillain-Barre syndrome (such as unsteadiness, loss of coordination, trouble swallowing/speaking/chewing, trouble moving your eyes). Tell your doctor right away if you have any serious side effects, including: mental/mood changes (depression, anxiety). Rarely, this medication has caused severe (sometimes fatal) liver problems and a buildup of lactic acid in the blood (lactic acidosis). These serious side effects may occur more often in women and obese patients. Get medical help right away if you have any of the following serious symptoms, including: symptoms of liver problems (such as nausea/vomiting that doesn't stop, stomach/abdominal pain, yellowing eyes/skin, dark urine), symptoms of lactic acidosis (such as deep/rapid breathing, drowsiness, nausea/vomiting). This is not a complete list of possible side effects. If you notice other effects not listed above, contact your doctor or pharmacist. In the US – Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088 or at www.fda.gov/medwatch. In Canada – Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to Health Canada at 1-866-234-2345. Uses This drug is used with other HIV medications to help control HIV infection. It helps to decrease the amount of HIV in your body so your immune system can work better. This lowers your chance of getting HIV complications (such as new infections, cancer) and improves your quality of life. Abacavir belongs to a class of drugs known as nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors-NRTI. Abacavir is not a cure for HIV infection. To decrease your risk of spreading HIV disease to others, continue to take all HIV medications exactly as prescribed by your

doctor. Use an effective barrier method (latex or polyurethane condoms/dental dams) during sexual activity as directed by your doctor. Do not share personal items (such as needles/syringes, toothbrushes, and razors) that may have contacted blood or other body fluids. Consult your doctor or pharmacist for more details. How to use Ziagen Read the Medication Guide and Warning Card provided by your pharmacist before you start taking abacavir and each time you get a refill. Carry the Warning Card with you at all times. If you have any questions, ask your doctor or pharmacist. Take this medication by mouth with or without food as directed by your doctor, usually 1 or 2 times daily. If you are using the liquid form of this medication, carefully measure the dose using a special measuring device/spoon. Do not use a household spoon because you may not get the correct dose. The dosage is based on your medical condition and response to treatment. In children, the dosage is also based on weight. If you stop using abacavir even for a short time and then restart the drug, you have an increased chance of developing a very serious (possibly fatal) allergic reaction. Refill your medication before you run out. Do not stop treatment unless directed by your doctor. Before restarting abacavir, consult your doctor or pharmacist, and be sure you have easy access to medical care. It is very important to continue taking this medication (and other HIV medications) exactly as prescribed by your doctor. Do not skip any doses. Do not increase your dose, take this drug more often than prescribed, or stop taking it (or other HIV medicines) even for a short time unless directed to do so by your doctor. Skipping or changing your dose without approval from your doctor may cause the amount of virus to increase, make the infection more difficult to treat (resistant), or worsen side effects. For the best effect, take this medication at evenly spaced times. To help you remember, take this medication at the same time(s) every day. Warnings In some patients, abacavir has caused a serious (sometimes fatal) allergic reaction. Your doctor should order a blood test to measure your risk before you start this medication or take it again. If the blood test shows you are at greater risk, you should not take this medication and your doctor should discuss other treatment choices with you. Symptoms of an allergic reaction may include any of the following: rash, itching/swelling (especially of the face/tongue/throat), severe dizziness, trouble breathing, fever, extreme tiredness, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, stomach pain, muscle aches, sore throat, or cough. Get medical help right away if you experience any of these symptoms. If you have stopped taking abacavir because of an allergic reaction, you must never take any form of abacavir again, or death could result. Tell all of your doctors and pharmacists if you have stopped taking abacavir due to an allergic reaction. Also, properly throw away any unused abacavir. Read the warning card provided with this medication for more details. Interactions Drug interactions may change how your medications work or increase your risk for serious side effects. This document does not contain all possible drug interactions. Keep a list of all the products you use (including prescription/nonprescription drugs and herbal products) and share it with your doctor and pharmacist. Do not start, stop, or change the dosage of any medicines without your doctor's approval. Some products that may interact with this drug include: alcohol, methadone, orlistat. This medication must not be taken with other medications that contain abacavir. Check the labels on all your other prescription medications to make sure they do not contain abacavir. If you have any questions, consult your doctor or pharmacist. Precautions Before taking abacavir, tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are allergic to it; or if you have any other allergies. This product may contain inactive ingredients, which can cause allergic reactions or other problems. Talk to your pharmacist for more details. Before using this medication, tell your doctor or pharmacist your medical history, especially of: liver problems (such as hepatitis B or C, or cirrhosis), kidney problems, alcohol use. Abacavir may increase your risk of a heart attack. Discuss the risks and benefits of treatment with your doctor and ways to lower your risk of heart disease. Tell your doctor if you have heart problems, if you smoke, or if you have other conditions that increase your risk of heart disease such as high blood pressure, diabetes, or high cholesterol levels. Before having surgery, tell your doctors or dentist about all the products you use (including prescription drugs, nonprescription drugs, and herbal products). Tell your doctor if you are pregnant before using this medication. Treatment can lower the risk of passing HIV infection to your baby. Discuss the risks and benefits with your doctor. This medication passes into breast milk. Because breast milk can transmit HIV, do not breast-feed. Overdose If someone has overdosed and has serious symptoms such as passing out or trouble breathing, call 911. Otherwise, call a poison control center right away. US residents can call their local poison control center at 1-800-222-1222. Canada residents can call a provincial poison control center. Do not share this medication with others. Lab and/or medical tests (such as liver function, viral load, T-cell counts) should be done while you are taking this medication. Keep all medical and lab appointments. Consult your doctor for more details. If you miss a dose, take it as soon as

you remember. If it is near the time of the next dose, skip the missed dose. Take your next dose at the regular time. Do not double the dose to catch up. Store abacavir solution or tablets at room temperature away from light and moisture. Abacavir solution may also be stored in the refrigerator. Do not freeze. The solution may turn from a clear or yellow color to a brown color over time. Do not store in the bathroom. Keep all medications away from children and pets. Do not flush medications down the toilet or pour them into a drain unless instructed to do so. Properly discard this product when it is expired or no longer needed. Consult your pharmacist or local waste disposal company.

Side Effects

Uses

Interactions

Other Details
