

Aciclovir 200mg, 400mg and 800mg Tablets (Aciclovir)

Read all of this leaflet carefully before you start taking this medicine because it contains important information for you.

- Keep this leaflet. You may need to read it again.
- If you have any further questions, ask your doctor or your pharmacist.
- This medicine has been prescribed for you only. Do not pass it on to others. It may harm them, even if their signs of illness are the same as yours.
- If you get any side effects, talk to your doctor. This includes any possible side effects not listed in this leaflet. (See Section 4).

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1 What Aciclovir is and what it is used for

Aciclovir Tablets belongs to a group of medicines called antivirals.

Aciclovir can be used:

- to treat herpes simplex infections of the skin e.g. cold sores and genital herpes (**excluding** newborn babies and children with low immune systems and severe herpes simplex infections)
- to prevent recurrent attacks of herpes simplex
- to help prevent those who have low immune systems from getting herpes infections
- to treat chicken pox (varicella infection) and shingles (herpes zoster infection)

2 What you need to know before you take Aciclovir

Do not take Aciclovir:

If you are allergic (hypersensitive) to aciclovir, valaciclovir or any of the other ingredients in these tablets (see Section 6 "Contents of the pack and other information").

Warnings and precautions

Talk to your doctor before taking Aciclovir:

- If you are taking other nephrotoxic medicines (medicines that may cause kidney failure) such as cyclosporin and tacrolimus (See "Other medicines and Aciclovir" section)
- If you suffer from kidney problems [including if you have dialysis therapy] (as you may need a lower dose of aciclovir - see Section 3 "How to take aciclovir")
- If you are elderly (as you may need a lower dose of aciclovir - see Section 3 "How to take aciclovir")
- If you have a severely low immune system and need to have this medicine over a long period of time or in repeated doses

Other medicines and Aciclovir

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking, have recently taken or might take any other medicines, including medicines obtained without a prescription. This includes herbal medicines.

Medicines which may interact with Aciclovir:

- Probenecid (used to treat gout)
- Cimetidine (used to reduce stomach acid)
- Mycophenolate mofetil (used to prevent transplant rejection)
- Medicines which may affect the kidneys e.g. cyclosporin, tacrolimus (nephrotoxic medicines)
- Theophylline (used to treat breathing problems, such as asthma)

Aciclovir with food and drink

It is important that you drink plenty of fluids while you are taking Aciclovir to prevent you becoming dehydrated, especially if you are elderly, suffer from kidney problems or are taking a high dose of Aciclovir.

Pregnancy and Breast-feeding

If you are pregnant or breast-feeding, think you may be pregnant or are planning to have a baby, ask your doctor for advice before taking this medicine.

Driving and using machines

Aciclovir is not likely to affect you being able to drive or use machinery. However, if you experience any difficulty or symptoms, it may be necessary to avoid driving or operating machinery or pursuing any activity in which full attention is required.

Aciclovir contains lactose:

If you have been told by your doctor that you have an intolerance to some sugars, talk to your doctor before taking this medicine.

3 How to take Aciclovir

Always take this medicine exactly as your doctor has told you. Check with your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure.

- These tablets are to be taken orally.
- The score line (present only in 400mg and 800mg tablets) is only there to help you break the tablet if you have difficulty swallowing it whole.

The recommended doses are:

Adults

Herpes Simplex Infections

For treatment of infections (including first and repeat attacks of genital herpes):

- 200mg five times a day for 5 days
- Patients with severe infections, may need to take this medicine for more than 5 days
- For patients with a severely low immune system (e.g. after a bone marrow transplant or those suffering from gut absorption problems), a higher dose of 400mg five times a day may be given or dosing via injection may be considered
- For patients suffering from kidney problems, a lower dose of 200mg two times a day for 5 days should be given

For prevention of repeat infections:

- 800mg divided into two or four daily doses. This dose may be reduced to 400-600mg a day.
- The length of treatment will depend on the infection and its severity
- Treatment should be interrupted at intervals of 6-12 months, in order to see if there are any possible changes in the natural history of the infection
- For patients suffering from kidney problems, a lower dose of 200mg two times a day should be given

For prevention of infections in patients with a low immune system:

- 200mg four times a day
- For patients with a severely low immune system or those suffering from gut absorption problems, a higher dose of 400mg four times a day may be given or alternatively, dosing via injection may be considered
- The length of treatment will depend on the infection and its severity
- For patients suffering from kidney problems, a lower dose of 200mg two times a day should be given

Shingles (Herpes Zoster infection)

- 800mg five times a day for 7 days.
- Treatment should begin within the first 3 days of the first signs of shingles occurring
- For patients with a low immune system or those suffering from gut absorption problems, dosing via injection may be considered
- For patients suffering from kidney problems, a lower dose of 800mg two - four times a day should be given depending on your condition

Chickenpox (Varicella infection)

- 800mg five times a day for 7 days at approximately 4 hour intervals (leaving out the night time dose)
- Treatment should begin within 24 hours of the first signs of a rash
- For patients with a low immune system or those suffering from gut absorption problems, dosing via injection may be considered

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