

For inquiries between 8am-10pm and for emergencies 24 hours call: 1-888-511-6222
Ambulatory Care Pharmacists: 604-806-8151 Please call two weeks in advance to
book your pharmacy appointments with the receptionist at 604-806-8060

DARUNAVIR (Prezista®) & RITONAVIR (Norvir®)

What is Darunavir?

- A protease inhibitor (PI) that inhibits the replication of the HIV virus in combination with other antiretroviral agents (ARV).
- Previously known as TMC 114 in clinical trials.
- Initial studies indicate that darunavir may be active against strains of HIV that are already resistant to some other currently available protease inhibitors.
- Available as 300 mg tablets (120 tablets/bottle)

What is Ritonavir?

- A protease inhibitor used to inhibit the replication of the HIV virus in combination with other antiretroviral agents or to increase blood levels of other protease inhibitors
- Available as 100 mg soft gel capsules and 80 mg/mL liquid.

Why am I taking these two protease inhibitors?

- When darunavir and ritonavir are taken together, ritonavir will "boost" the level of darunavir and increase its effect.

How do I take these?

- Usual adult dose is darunavir 600 mg (2 tablets) twice daily, with ritonavir 100 mg (1 capsule) twice daily, within 30min after a meal. Take darunavir and ritonavir at the same time. Take only as prescribed by your physician.
- Darunavir and ritonavir should be taken with food to increase absorption and decrease side effects. Swallow tablets and capsules whole.
- Alcohol is not recommended in the first 4 weeks of therapy and should be used with caution thereafter.

Take darunavir and ritonavir at the same time every day as missing doses or taking doses late may lead to the development of drug resistance. If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember if it is within 6 hours of usual dose time. If it is close to your next scheduled dose, skip the missed dose and take your next dose at the usual time. Do not take two doses at the same time.

What should I expect?

Darunavir:

- Common side effects may include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, stomach pain or gas, tiredness and headache. These effects may diminish during the first month of treatment. You may also experience an allergic skin rash. Contact your physician or pharmacist if any side effect occurs and remains persistent.

- Darunavir may affect your liver and cause a change in liver function tests. Contact your physician if you have stomach pain that doesn't go away and/or have signs of jaundice (e.g. yellowing of the skin or eyes, pale stool etc).
- Darunavir has been shown to increase total cholesterol and/or triglyceride levels. Redistribution or accumulation/loss of body fat (lipodystrophy) and increases in blood sugars may also occur. The cause and long-term health effects of these conditions are unknown at this time.

Ritonavir:

- Common side effects include nausea, diarrhea, vomiting, stomach pain, taste changes and abnormal feelings in the hands, feet or in and around the mouth.

WARNING:

Protease inhibitors not only interact with each other, but may change the level of other medications (by changing the processing of drugs in your liver). Always check with the pharmacist (1-888-511-6222) or your doctor before starting any new medications (prescription, non-prescription and herbal) to ensure the safety of the combination. This is important as in some cases the combination may result in serious and/or life-threatening complications.

Some medications can interact with darunavir and/or ritonavir requiring a dosage adjustment or an alternate medication:

eg. Some anti-histamines, sedatives, anti-tuberculosis medications, some anti-fungal medications, narcotic analgesics, methadone, heart/blood-pressure medications, psychiatric medications, anti-convulsants, transplant/immunosuppressant medications, warfarin, cholesterol lowering agents, sildenafil (Viagra®), oral contraceptives (birth control pill), ergot containing migraine medications.

Avoid the following Herbal/Natural remedies: *St. John's Wort, Milk Thistle, raw Garlic or Garlic capsules* which may decrease levels of darunavir.

How do I store it?

- Darunavir tablets should be stored at room temperature in a cool, dry place.
- Ritonavir capsules should be stored in the refrigerator (2-8 degrees Celsius), but is stable at room temperature (less than 25 degrees Celsius) for thirty days. Ritonavir liquid should NOT be stored in the refrigerator. It should be kept at room temperature (20-25 degrees Celsius) in its original container, tightly sealed, away from excessive heat and protected from light.
- Store all medications out of the reach of children.

Labwork to be done:

- CBC with differential, liver enzymes, total bilirubin, amylase, fasting glucose and lipid panel, plasma viral load, CD4 count