

Staying on Schedule

How to take each HIV medicine

HIV medicines are a key part of your HIV treatment. They can reduce the amount of HIV in your blood to very low levels and help restore your immune system health and your overall health. When you start taking HIV medicines, it is a big commitment. You have to take HIV medicines on time, exactly as they are prescribed, for them to work properly.

What this booklet does:

- Shows a picture of each HIV medicine.
- Lists the amount of the drug in each dose (the amount you take may vary).
- Tells you when to take the medicine and whether or not to eat food with it.
- Gives general tips for taking each HIV medicine.

An HIV medicine schedule is different for everyone. Your doctor or health care provider will work closely with you to decide which medicines to take and how much to take.

Ask questions before you start taking a medicine

When you pick up a new prescription or a refill of an HIV medicine at the drugstore, read the directions carefully. If you don't understand anything about taking the medicine, ask the pharmacist to explain.

Make sure the medicines look the same as the ones you are taking. Check to see if the instructions for taking them are the same instructions given by your doctor or health care provider. If you get home and you still have questions, call the pharmacist or your doctor before you start taking the medicine.

The prescription and the instructions for taking the medicine may have words and numbers that are hard to understand. On the next few pages are some common terms you will see.

What form does the medicine come in?



Capsules: Have a soft coating on the outside; the medicine inside is a powder or liquid.



Tablets: These are hard, like pills, and break up when they get into your stomach.



Liquid: You mix a powder form of the medicine into water or another liquid and drink it.

How often do you take the medicine?

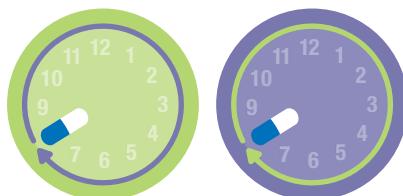
Sometimes a doctor will write these terms to describe how often to take a prescription:

Qd



Qd = take one dose a day.

Bid



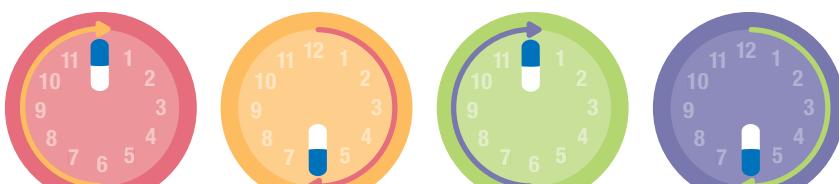
Bid = take one dose, twice a day.

Tid



Tid = take one dose, three times a day.

Qid



Qid = take one dose, four times a day.

When do you take the medicine and should you take it with food?



"Take on an empty stomach" means you take the medicine one hour before a meal or two hours after a meal.



"Take with a meal or a snack" means you should eat a snack or a full meal right before or right after taking the medicine.



"Take three times a day" means you take the doses 8 hours apart. If you take the first dose when you wake up at 7:00 a.m., take the second dose 8 hours later – at 3:00 p.m. Take the third dose 8 hours after that – at 11:00 p.m.



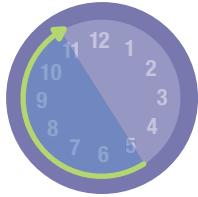
a.c. = take before meals.



p.c. = take after meals.



a.m. = take in the morning or before midday.



p.m. = take in the afternoon or evening.

How to read the tables in this booklet

Brand name

The table lists two names for each drug. The “**Brand**” name is the name the company gives the drug. It is usually the most common name for the drug. The “**Generic**” name is the scientific name of the drug. For example, a brand name is “Doritos” and a generic name is “corn chips.”

Generic name

Dosage

In the table, the row called “**Dosage**” tells you what form the medicine comes in: tablet, capsule, powder, or liquid. It lists how much of the medicine comes in each dose. The total dosage you take each day may vary depending on things like your body weight and the drug’s side effects. Your doctor will help you figure out your daily dosage. If you miss a dose, do not double your dose the next time you take the medicine – just take the normal dose.

How to take and store this medicine

“**How To Take and Store This Medicine**” explains whether you take the medicine with or without food and how to store the drug.

Notes and advice on taking this medicine

“**Notes and Advice on Taking this Medicine**” lists a few major facts about taking each medicine. Many HIV medicines have serious side effects that are explained in a separate booklet: *Managing Side Effects of HIV Medicines*. See page 22 to order that booklet.

Different Classes of HIV Medications

Nucleoside/Nucleotide Reverse Transcriptase Inhibitors (NRTIs)

After HIV infects cells in your immune system, it must copy its own genetic “code” to infect other cells. NRTIs provide HIV with faulty building blocks – or “fake” DNA – so HIV cannot produce new copies of itself.

Non-Nucleoside Reverse Transcriptase Inhibitors (NNRTIs)

NNRTIs work in a different way than NRTIs, but attach themselves to the same part of the HIV virus that is trying to make copies of itself. NNRTIs do this by slipping into HIV’s copying machinery and literally bending it out of shape. This prevents the cells from producing new copies of the virus.

Protease Inhibitors (PIs)

After HIV has finished making a full copy of itself, the new HIV virus has to be trimmed and fitted into a package to order to leave the cell and infect new cells. This new “package” is a donut-shaped HIV protein. Protease inhibitors plug up this donut hole and prevent it from working.

Entry Inhibitors (including Fusion Inhibitors)

Entry inhibitors block the HIV virus before it enters a healthy cell. Some of these drugs attach themselves to proteins on the outside of the healthy cells and work as protective shields. Others bind onto the surface of the HIV virus. All of these drugs prevent HIV from binding to or drilling into healthy cells.

Integrase Inhibitors

In order to make copies of itself, the HIV virus must break into the genetic “code” of healthy cells. This is called integration. Integrase inhibitors work by blocking this process.

Protease Inhibitors (PIs)

Brand name	Generic name	Dosage	How to take and store this medicine	Notes and advice on taking this medicine
Amprenavir® 	Agenerase	Comes in 50-mg gel capsule or 15-mg/mL liquid dose. The amount you take depends on how much you weigh. The capsule and the liquid dose are not equal.	Take twice a day, with or without food. Store at room temperature.	Do not take with high-fat foods, vitamin E supplements, or antacids. Avoid alcohol with liquid solution. The capsules are approved for children age 4 years or older.
Aptivus® plus Norvir®  	Tipranavir	Comes in 250-mg capsules. Must be taken with the PI Norvir (see page 9). Take 100-mg of Norvir with each 250-mg of Aptivus.	Take twice a day, with food. Keep in refrigerator before opening. After opening, you can store it at room temperature for up to two months.	Aptivus is for people who are resistant to other anti-HIV medications or who have become resistant to more than one PI.
Crixivan® 	Indinavir	Comes in 100-mg, 200-mg, 333-mg, and 400-mg capsules.	Take with Norvir every 12 hours – with or without food. Store at room temperature in the original bottle with the drying packet.	Drink plenty of fluids to prevent kidney stones.
Invirase® plus Norvir®  	Saquinavir mesylate	Comes in 200-mg and 500-mg capsules and tablets and soft-gel tablets. Must be taken with the PI Norvir (see page 9).	Take once or twice a day. Take capsules within one hour before or two hours after a high-fat meal. Store at room temperature.	Soft gel capsules are easier if Invirase causes an upset stomach.

Protease Inhibitors (PIs) (continued)

Brand name	Generic name	Dosage	How to take and store this medicine	Notes and advice on taking this medicine
Lexiva® 	Fosamprenavir	Comes in 700-mg tablets. Take 100-mg of Norvir with every 700-mg of Lexiva.	Take once or twice a day, with or without food. Store at room temperature.	Once-a-day dosing is only for people who are just starting to take PIs.
plus Norvir® 	Ritonavir	Comes in 100-mg, 200-mg, or 400-mg soft gel capsule and liquid form of 600-mg/7.5 mL. Norvir is usually taken to "boost" the effectiveness of other PIs.	Take once or twice a day, with food. You can mix the liquid with chocolate milk or another drink to make it taste less bitter. Capsules can be stored at room temperature for up to 30 days. Do not refrigerate oral solution.	Norvir can cause side effects when used with some non-HIV medicines — like birth control pills, cholesterol-lowering drugs, and erectile dysfunction drugs. Ask your doctor for a full list of these drugs.

Combination Protease Inhibitors (contain two PIs)

Brand name	Generic name	Dosage	How to take and store this medicine	Notes and advice on taking this medicine
Prezista® 	Darunavir	Comes in 300-mg tablets. Must be taken with Norvir.	Take twice a day, with a meal. Do not chew tablets. Store at room temperature.	Prezista is for people who are resistant to other anti-HIV drugs, especially to one or more PIs. Norvir helps keep up the level of Prezista in your blood and lowers your chances of becoming resistant to it.
plus Norvir® 				
Reyataz® 	Atazanavir	Comes in 100-mg, 150-mg, 200-mg, and 300-mg capsules. Can be taken with Norvir or by itself.	Take once a day, with a light meal. Store at room temperature.	Do not take Reyataz if you take proton pump inhibitors, like Prilosec or Nexium. Do not take stomach antacids (Rolaids, Tums, Mylanta, etc.) within two hours of taking Reyataz.
plus Norvir® 				
Viracept® 	Nelfinavir	Comes in 250-mg and 625-mg tablets and in powder form (50-mg/g).	Take twice a day, with a high-fat meal or snack. Store at room temperature. Drink the liquid form as soon as you mix it. If you mix it and put it in the refrigerator, drink it within six hours.	Viracept is safe for pregnant women and for children. Do not take with stomach antacids.

Combination Protease Inhibitors (contain two PIs) (continued)

Brand name	Generic name	Dosage	How to take and store this medicine	Notes and advice on taking this medicine
Kaletra® 	Lopinavir + Ritonavir	Comes in film-coated tablets with 200-mg lopinavir and 50 mg ritonavir. Liquid form has 80-mg lopinavir and 20-mg ritonavir per mL.	<p>Tablets: take either once or twice a day, with or without food. Taking with food can help reduce side effects. Swallow the tablet whole.</p> <p>Liquid form: take once or twice a day, with food. Try to eat a meal that has some fat content.</p> <p>If you also take Sustiva or Viramune, take Kaletra twice a day. Your doctor may prescribe a higher dose of Kaletra.</p>	<p>Liquid form is 42% alcohol.</p> <p>Kaletra can reduce the effectiveness of birth control pills.</p> <p>The two drugs in Kaletra may react with many non-HIV medicines. Ask your doctor for a complete list of these medicines.</p>

Nucleoside and Nucleotide Reverse Transcriptase Inhibitors (NRTIs)

Brand name	Generic name	Dosage	How to take and store this medicine	Notes and advice on taking this medicine
Emtriva® 	Emtricitabine (FTC)	Comes in 200-mg capsules or 240-mg (24 mL) liquid dosage. Children ages 3 months to 17 years can take Emtriva. The dosage depends on their body weight.	Take once a day, with or without food. Store at room temperature.	Emtriva is also used in the "combination" medicines Truvada and Atripla. Dosing may need to be adjusted for people with kidney problems. Emtriva also is used to treat hepatitis B infection.
Epivir® 	Lamivudine (3TC)	Comes in 150-mg or 300-mg tablets. Liquid solution: comes in 10 mg/mL. Dosing depends on your body weight. People with kidney problems take lower doses.	Take twice a day, with or without food. Store tablets at room temperature. Keep liquid solution in refrigerator.	Epivir is also used in the combination drugs Combivir, Trizivir, and Epzicom. It also comes in a form called Epivir-HBV, which is used to treat people who have HIV and hepatitis B.
Videx® 	Didanosine (ddl)	Comes in 125-mg, 200-mg, 250-mg, or 400-mg capsules. Also comes in 100-mg, 167-mg, or 250-mg powder that you mix in water. Videx EC is a slow-release formula that comes in 125-mg, 200-mg, 250-mg, and 400-mg capsules. Dosing depends on your body weight.	Take one hour before or two hours after food or drinks (except water). Take Videx EC once a day, on an empty stomach.	Alcohol can make side effects worse. Avoid drinks that have a high acid content, like orange juice or tomato juice.
Viread® 	Tenofovir	Comes in 300-mg tablets.	Take once a day, with a meal that includes some fat content. Store at room temperature.	There are special instructions for people with kidney problems. Tenofovir is also contained in the "combination" drug Atripla.

Nucleoside and Nucleotide Reverse Transcriptase Inhibitors (NRTIs) (continued)

Brand name	Generic name	Dosage	How to take and store this medicine	Notes and advice on taking this medicine
Zerit®	Stavudine (d4T)	Comes in 15-mg, 20-mg, 30-mg, and 40-mg capsules. Also comes in powder that you mix in water (1 mg/mL).	Take twice a day, with or without food.	There may be special doses and instructions for people with kidney problems. You may need to take in lower doses if your body weight is low.
Ziagen®	Abacavir	Comes in 300-mg tablets or 20-mg/mL liquid form. Liquid is available in strawberry-banana flavor.	Take once or twice a day, with or without food. Store at room temperature.	Avoid alcohol for one hour before or two hours after taking a dose. If you get a flu-like reaction (body aches, fever) or a skin rash, call your doctor right away. Abacavir is also contained in the combination drugs Epzicom and Combivir.
Zidovudine® (AZT or ZDV)	Retrovir	Comes in four forms: 100-mg capsules or 300-mg tablets. Also comes in two liquid forms (10 mg/mL) that you can either inject or drink.	Take twice a day, with or without food. Store capsules or tablets at room temperature.	Try not to eat fatty foods when you take your doses because it lowers the amount of AZT that gets into your blood. There are special instructions for people with kidney problems or those on kidney dialysis. Zidovudine is also contained in the combination drugs Combivir and Trizivir.

Combination Nucleoside and Nucleotide Reverse Transcriptase Inhibitors (NRTIs): Contain two or more NRTIs

Brand name	Generic name	Dosage	How to take and store this medicine	Notes and advice on taking this medicine
Combivir® = Epivir® + Zidovudine® 	Combines Epivir (3TC, lamivudine) and Retrovir (AZT, zidovudine).	Comes in tablet form that combines 300-mg of Epivir and 150-mg of Retrovir.	Take twice a day (12 hours apart), with or without food. Store at room temperature.	Do not take Combivir if you are taking Emtriva or Truvada because the Epivir in Combivir is very similar to Emtriva. You may not be able to take Combivir if you have kidney problems.
Epzicom® = Ziagen® + Epivir® 	Combines Ziagen (abacavir) and Epivir (3TC, lamivudine).	Each tablet combines 600-mg of Ziagen and 300-mg of Epivir.	Take once a day, with or without food. Store at room temperature.	Do not take Epzicom if you already take Emtriva or Truvada. The Epivir in Epzicom is very similar to Emtriva. Do not take Epzicom if you have kidney problems. If you had a bad reaction to Ziagen or Trizivir, do not take Epzicom. Call your doctor if you have flu-like symptoms.
Trizivir = Retrovir® + Epivir® + Ziagen® 	Combines zidovudine, 3TC/ lamivudine, and abacavir – three drugs from the same class of nucleosides.	Each tablet has 300-mg of Retrovir, 150-mg of Epivir, and 300-mg of Ziagen.	Take one tablet twice a day, with or without food. Store at room temperature.	Because Trizivir contains Ziagen, it may cause flu-like symptoms or a skin rash. Call your doctor right away if this happens. But do not stop taking Trizivir unless your doctor tells you to. Do not take Trizivir if you had a bad reaction to Epzicom or Ziagen. You may not be able to take Trizivir if you have kidney problems.

Non-nucleoside Reverse Transcriptase Inhibitors (NNRTIs)

Brand name	Generic name	Dosage	How to take and store this medicine	Notes and advice on taking this medicine
Intelence® 	Etravirine (TMC 125)	Comes in 100-mg tablets.	Take twice a day, with food. Store at room temperature.	<p>Intelence is the first HIV medicine approved for patients who have developed resistance to older NNRTIs. You have to take other HIV medicines with Intelence. There are several HIV medicines and non-HIV medicines you cannot take with Intelence.</p> <p>Ask your doctor to review a list of these medicines with you. Rash occurs in some patients who take Intelence; tell your doctor if the rash becomes severe.</p>
Truvada® = Viread® + Emtriva® 	Combines tenofovir and emtricitabine.	Each tablet contains 300-mg of Viread and 200-mg of Emtriva.	Take one tablet a day, with or without food.	Your doctor may adjust the dosage or stop prescribing Truvada if you have kidney problems.
Rescriptor® 	Delavirdine	Comes in 100-mg or 200-mg tablets. The 100-mg tablets can be dissolved in water.	Take three times a day (every 8 hours), with or without food.	Do not take with grapefruit juice or antacids. Ask your doctor about taking Rescriptor if you also use certain cholesterol-lowering medicines, headache medicines, or the herb St. John's wort.

Non-nucleoside Reverse Transcriptase Inhibitors (NNRTIs) (continued)

Brand name	Generic name	Dosage	How to take and store this medicine	Notes and advice on taking this medicine
Edurant® 	Rilpivirine	Comes in 25-mg tablets.	Take once a day, with food.	Do not take Edurant® if you are also taking anticonvulsants, proton pump inhibitors, glucocorticoid systemic dexamethasone, or the herb St. John's wort.
Sustiva® 	Efavirenz	Comes in 50-mg, 100-mg, 200-mg, and 600-mg capsules. It is approved for children age 3 years or older. Comes in strawberry-mint flavor.	Take once a day on an empty stomach or with a light, low-fat snack. Try to take it at bedtime.	Women who are pregnant or who plan to become pregnant should not take Sustiva. If you have sex while taking Sustiva, use a "barrier" method of birth control (a condom). Sustiva may also cause a "false-positive" test for marijuana.
Viramune® 	Nevirapine	Comes in 200-mg tablets or 50-mg/5 mL liquid form.	Take either once or twice a day, with or without food.	Use carefully if you have liver problems. Viramune is very effective at preventing HIV from being spread from mother to baby.

Fusion (Entry) Inhibitors

Brand name	Generic name	Dosage	How to take and store this medicine	Notes and advice on taking this medicine
Fuzeon®	Enfuvirtide (T-20)	Comes in powder form. Each 108-mg dose comes in a vial. You mix it with 1.1mL of sterile water and inject 90 mg/ 1 mL under your skin in the upper arm, abdomen, or side of the thigh.	Take one shot twice a day (every 12 hours), with or without food. Store the powder at room temperature. Once it is mixed, keep in the refrigerator (36° to 46° F) and use it within 24 hours.	If the place where you inject it gets sore, pick another injection site. Ask your doctor or health care provider to show you the best way to mix and inject Fuzeon.

Fixed-Dose Combination of NRTIs and NNRTIs

Brand name	Generic name	Dosage	How to take and store this medicine	Notes and advice on taking this medicine
Atripla® 	Efavirenz + emtricitabine + tenofovir	Each tablet has 600-mg of Sustiva, 200-mg of Emtriva, and 300-mg of Viread.	Take once a day on an empty stomach or with a light, low-fat snack.	<p>Because you take only one dose a day, do not miss a dose. Each drug contained in Atripla has different side effects and precautions for taking it.</p> <p>Read about each drug or ask your doctor or health care provider to explain the effects.</p> <p>Atripla can cause a false-positive test for marijuana.</p> <p>Do not use Atripla if you have kidney problems.</p>
Complera® 	Emtricitabine/ rilpivirine/ tenofovir disoproxil fumarate.	Each tablet contains 200 mg emtricitabine, 25 mg rilpivirine, 300 mg tenofovir disoproxil fumarate.	Take once a day, with food.	<p>See "black box" warnings for lactic acidosis/severe hepatomegaly with steatosis. Safety and efficacy of Complera for treatment of hepatitis B have not been established.</p>
Stribild® = Tenofovir + Emtricitabine + Elvitegravir + Cobicistat 	Combines tenofovir, emtricitabine, elvitegravir, and cobicistat.	Each pill contains 300 mg tenofovir, 200 mg emtricitabine, 150 mg elvitegravir, and 150 mg cobicistat.	Take once a day, with food.	<p>Stribild is for people who have not taken any HIV medications before.</p> <p>Tenofovir can cause kidney problems. The combination of tenofovir and emtricitabine can cause lactic acidosis and enlarged liver (hepatomegaly).</p> <p>Your doctor may stop prescribing Stribild if you develop kidney problems.</p>

CCR5 Co-receptor Antagonists

Brand name	Generic name	Dosage	How to take and store this medicine	Notes and advice on taking this medicine
Selzentry® 	Maraviroc	Comes in 150-mg and 300-mg tablets.	Take twice a day, with or without food. Store at room temperature.	Selzentry only works against a certain type (strain) of HIV. You have to take a blood test called a "tropism assay" first to make sure you have that HIV strain. Selzentry may react with HIV medicines and non-HIV medicines you are taking. Ask your doctor for a list of those medicines. The dosage of Selzentry you take will depend on what other medicines you are taking.

Integrase Inhibitors

Brand name	Generic name	Dosage	How to take and store this medicine	Notes and advice on taking this medicine
Tivicay®	Dolutegravir	50 milligrams.	Take once a day, with or without food. Store at room temperature.	<p>Tivicay® is not approved as a "stand-alone" medication — it is taken in combination with two other HIV drugs. People who have not previously taken other integrase inhibitors usually take Tivicay® once a day, while people who have taken integrase inhibitors take it twice daily.</p> <p>It can be taken by children aged 12 and older who weigh at least 40 kg (88 lbs.).</p> <p>Tivicay® can cause hypersensitivity reactions and can impair liver function in patients coinfected with hepatitis B or hepatitis C.</p>
Isentress®	Raltegravir	Comes in 400-mg tablets.	Take twice a day, with or without food. Store at room temperature.	<p>Isentress is approved for people who have developed resistance to at least one drug in all three classes: PIs, NRTIs, and NNRTIs.</p> <p>It is always taken in combination with other HIV drugs, but Isentress does not need ritonavir as a booster.</p>

Sample Timeline for Taking HIV Medicines

Here is an example of a daily schedule for taking the NRTI Combivir (zidovudine + lamivudine) plus the PI “booster” Kaletra (lopinavir + ritonavir).

Combivir: Take one tablet in the morning, one in the evening — 12 hours apart.

Take with or without food.

Kaletra: Take two tablets twice a day OR take four tablets once a day. Take with or without food. Because you take Combivir 12 hours apart, you would take the tablets at 8 am and 8 pm. If you take Kaletra twice a day, take it at the same time you take Combivir — at 8 am and 8 pm. That way, it will be easier to remember to take the pills together. You can also reduce side effects to your digestive system by taking both medicines after breakfast and after dinner.



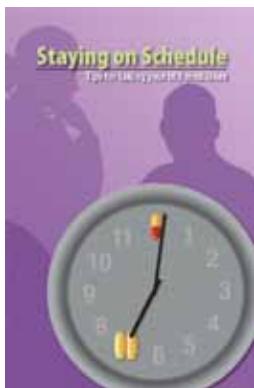
Morning Dose One tablet Combivir at 8 am
Two tablets Kaletra at 8 am



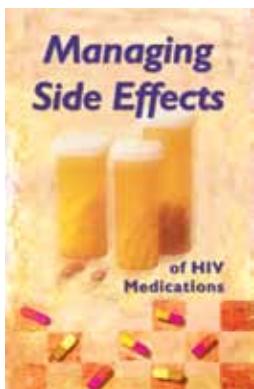
Mid-Day Dose none
Evening Dose One tablet Combivir at 8 pm
Two tablets Kaletra at 8 pm

To learn more about taking HIV medicines...

The New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute (NYSDOH/AI) has more booklets to help you stick with your HIV medicine schedule:



Staying on Schedule: Tips for Taking Your HIV Medicines explains why it is so important to take HIV medicines on time and gives you advice on how to stay on schedule. It is available on the website and in print form: www.health.ny.gov/publication/9236.pdf



Managing Side Effects of HIV Medicines explains side effects generally and lists specific side effects of each HIV medicine. It is on the NYSDOH website: www.health.ny.gov/publications/9408.pdf

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) has detailed advice for using HIV medicines: www.hab.hrsa.gov/tools/HIVpocketguide/index.htm.

Hotline numbers

If you have a question about HIV medicines and you cannot reach your doctor or health care provider, call one of these free hotline numbers:

U.S. Centers for Disease Control Treatment Hotline (AIDS Info)

1-800-448-0440

New York State Department of Health

1-800-541-AIDS (English)

1-800-233-SIDA (Spanish)

HIV/AIDS TDD Information Line

1-800-369-2437

Voice callers can use the New York Relay System: Call 711 or 1-800-421-1220 and ask the operator to dial 1-800-541-2437.

