

Voriconazole – respiratory medicine

Information for patients

Why have I been prescribed voriconazole?

Voriconazole belongs to a group of anti-fungal drugs called triazoles. It is used to treat respiratory conditions caused by *Aspergillus* fungus.

Voriconazole kills the *Aspergillus* fungus by preventing it from growing.

What dose of voriconazole should I take?

The usual dose is 200mg twice a day, 12 hours apart.

This dose may be adjusted by your doctor based on blood levels that will be taken. Some people may also be prescribed a lower dose, mainly due to low body weight. Your doctor will confirm what dose you should take.

Voriconazole may be supplied as 50mg or 200mg tablets, or as a liquid. It is important to check the directions on the label of each new box to ensure you are taking the correct dose.

If you are pregnant, planning a family or if you are breastfeeding speak to your doctor before using this medicine.

How should I take my voriconazole?

Always take voriconazole as directed by your doctor and pharmacist. Do not stop taking it unless advised by a healthcare professional.

The medicine should be taken on an empty stomach. This is 1 hour before or 2 hours after food. Swallow the tablets whole with a full glass of water, at roughly the same times each day.

What are the side effects of voriconazole?

Most commonly voriconazole can cause headache, nausea, vomiting, stomach pain, diarrhoea, and blurred vision. If your vision does become blurred, this should resolve over a few weeks and will not damage the eyes.

Some people taking voriconazole may experience tingling in the hands and feet or a rash may develop. If you develop any of these symptoms, urgent medical attention should be sought.

Voriconazole can very occasionally cause changes in your ECG (heart tracing), so your doctor will check this before starting treatment. If you notice any dizziness, light headedness, or palpitations (fast heart rate) please contact your doctor promptly.

Voriconazole can very occasionally upset your liver. If you notice any yellowing of your skin or the whites of your eyes, anorexia, new abdominal pain, vomiting, fatigue or dark urine contact your doctor promptly.

Voriconazole can make your skin very sensitive to sunlight and there is a small chance that you can develop skin cancer over time. You must **always** wear a high factor sun cream on your skin and lips when out in the sun (SPF 50 with UVA and UVB protection) and avoid direct sunlight – even in the winter. You should cover your skin as much as possible and consider using a lip balm containing SPF. Do not use sun beds whilst on Voriconazole. If you experience sunburn or notice any changes in your skin, you should contact your doctor.

For a full list of side effects please read the leaflet in your medication box.

Is any monitoring needed?

To check that your Voriconazole is at a safe and effective dose, the level of the drug in your body needs to be checked. Your doctor will arrange for you to receive a blood test for this and may alter your dose depending on the result.

Your liver and kidney function will be checked before starting treatment and will need to be monitored at regular intervals either by your GP or in clinic.

What if I forget to take my voriconazole?

If you forget to take one dose, take your next dose when it is due. **DO NOT** take a double dose to make up for a forgotten dose.

It is important to remember to take your voriconazole tablets regularly at the same time each day.

What if I take too much?

If you take more voriconazole than you have been prescribed, contact your doctor or pharmacist immediately. You may notice abnormal intolerance to light as a result of taking too much.

Can I take voriconazole with my other medications?

Voriconazole can interact with some medicines. Your doctor or pharmacist will review your current medicines and advise if any changes are necessary.

Always check with your doctor or pharmacist before taking any new or over the counter medicines.

You or your doctor can check whether a new medication will interact with itraconazole/voriconazole at:

www.aspergillus.org.uk



How should I store my voriconazole?

Store your Voriconazole in the original container at room temperature and out of the reach and sight of children.

If you experience any unusual side-effects or have any questions, please contact.....

More information can be found at:

www.aspergillosis.org

