



plain and simple facts

# DRUG INFORMATION



## Amprenavir (Agenerase)

### Why am I given amprenavir as my medication?

- Amprenavir (also called Agenerase) is a drug used in combination with other medications to treat HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) infection.
- Amprenavir blocks a protein called “protease.” It belongs to a class of drugs called protease inhibitors (PIs). The HIV virus needs this protein to reproduce itself, so by blocking it the drug helps slow down HIV disease.
- Taking this medication can reduce the amount of virus in your body. It can also reduce your chance of getting sick from AIDS-related illnesses, help you stay healthy longer or get your health back. It may also reduce the damage to your immune system.

### How do I take this medication?

- Amprenavir comes in 150 mg and 200 mg capsules.
- The usual dose of amprenavir is 1,200 mg twice daily.
- Amprenavir can be taken with or without food.
- Amprenavir should be kept at room temperature in a dry place. Don’t put the medicine in the bathroom or kitchen, as moisture may cause the medicine to lose its effectiveness.
- Keep it out of reach of children.

### What if I forget to take a dose?

- Take the dose you missed as soon as possible. However, if it is within 2 hours of your next dose, just continue with your regular schedule. Do not double the dose.
- Recent studies have found that for the anti-HIV medications to work, all the medications need to be taken regularly and consistently. Missing or skipping doses of your medication may make it lose its effectiveness, as the virus can change itself and become resistant to the medication.

### What are the side effects of amprenavir?

- The most common side effect of amprenavir is headache. This can often be controlled with non-prescription medications such as Tylenol (acetaminophen) or Advil (ibuprofen). To avoid potential liver problems with Tylenol, take it in small doses for short periods of time.
- Other side effects may include:
  - ~ skin rash
  - ~ stomach upset
  - ~ nausea

- ~ gas
- ~ diarrhea
- ~ numbness and tingling around the lips

- Longer-term side effects of amprenavir can include:
  - ~ increase in the sugar and fat (cholesterol, triglyceride) levels in your blood
  - ~ abnormal body fat distribution (increase in waist and breast size and thinning of the face, arms and legs)
- Consult your doctor or pharmacist if you have these side effects. Do not stop the medication before talking with them.

## **Can I take amprenavir with other medications?**

- Amprenavir can interact with other drugs. It is important to tell your doctor and pharmacist about all the prescription and non-prescription medications (including vitamins and herbs) you are taking.
- Amprenavir should not be taken with: Halcion (triazolam), Versed (midazolam), Hismanal (astemizole), Seldane (terfenadine), Prepulsid (cisapride), Cordarone (amiodarone), quinidine, rifampin and migraine medications (eg. Ergomar, Cafegot).
- Amprenavir contains vitamin E. To prevent overdose, do not take additional vitamin E supplements while you are taking amprenavir.

## **Can I take amprenavir with alcohol or street drugs?**

- It is advisable to avoid excessive amount of alcohol while you are taking amprenavir. Alcohol may interact with your medications. Do not skip a dose of your medication because you want a drink.
- Amprenavir may also interact with street drugs. Consult your doctor or pharmacist if you are using street drugs so they can advise you with the necessary precautions.

## **Can I take amprenavir if I am pregnant or breast-feeding?**

- If you are pregnant and wish to take amprenavir, consult your doctor.
- Since the HIV virus can be transmitted through breast milk, breast-feeding is not recommended in HIV-positive women.

## **What other precautions do I need to know when taking amprenavir?**

- Keep your appointments with your physician for blood tests to check your liver and kidney function, blood sugar, cholesterol and triglyceride levels regularly.
- Make sure you have a continuous supply of the medication.
- Amprenavir does not kill the virus or cure AIDS. It also does not prevent the transmission of HIV, so remember to always take precautions if you are having sex (use latex condoms) or using drugs (use clean syringes).



---

**Decisions about particular medical treatments should always be made in consultation with a qualified medical practitioner knowledgeable about HIV-related illness and the treatments in question.**



The Canadian AIDS Treatment Information Exchange (CATIE) in good faith provides information resources to help people living with HIV/AIDS who wish to manage their own health care in partnership with their care providers. Information accessed through or published or provided by CATIE, however, is not to be considered medical advice. We do not recommend or advocate particular treatments and we urge users to consult as broad range of sources as possible. We strongly urge readers to consult with a qualified medical practitioner prior to undertaking any decision, use or action of a medical nature.

We do not guarantee the accuracy or completeness of any information accessed through or published or provided by CATIE. Persons relying on this information do so entirely at their own risk. Neither CATIE nor the Public Health Agency of Canada nor any of their employees, directors, officers or volunteers may be held liable for damages of any kind that may result from the use or misuse of any such information. The views expressed herein or in any article or publication accessed or published or provided by CATIE are solely those of the authors and do not reflect the policies or opinions of CATIE or the views of the Public Health Agency of Canada.

Copyright: This Fact Sheet is made available through a collaboration between Asian Community AIDS Services (ACAS) and the Canadian AIDS Treatment Information Exchange (CATIE). Original content developed by ACAS, 2001.

This information is also available in French, Chinese, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Swahili, and other languages at [languages.catie.ca](http://languages.catie.ca) and [www.acas.org](http://www.acas.org)

Funding has been provided by the Public Health Agency of Canada.