



plain and simple facts

# DRUG INFORMATION



## Tenofovir (Viread)

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

- Tenofovir (also called Viread) is a drug that is used in combination with other drugs to treat HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) infection.
- Tenofovir blocks a protein called “Reverse Transcriptase”, as a result, it belongs to a class of drugs called Reverse Transcriptase Inhibitors (RTI). 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?

- Tenofovir comes in 300 mg tablets.
- Tenofovir is usually taken as 300 mg once daily with food.
- Tenofovir should be stored at room temperature in a dry place. Avoid putting 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 two 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 tenofovir?

- Most of the common side effects reported with tenofovir are mild, and may include headache, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting and flatulence (intestinal gas). In rare cases, tenofovir may cause changes in blood tests of your liver and muscle functions. To monitor for these side effects, blood tests must be done regularly.
- The long-term side effects of tenofovir are unknown at this time.
- If you are experiencing side effects from the medication, call your doctor or pharmacist and discuss your symptoms with them.
- Do not stop the medication before you talk to your doctor or pharmacist, they may have suggestions on how you can manage the side effects without stopping the medication.

## Can I take tenofovir with other medications?

- Tenofovir can interact with other drugs. Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all the prescription and non-prescription medications (including vitamins and herbs) that you are taking.
- Common drugs that are known to interact with tenofovir include ddl (Videx or Videx-EC). The dosage of ddl may need to be adjusted if you are taking both drugs together.

## Can I take tenofovir with alcohol or street drugs?

- In general, it is advisable to avoid excessive amount of alcohol and street drugs while you are taking anti-HIV medications. Alcohol may interact with some of your medications. Do not skip a dose of your medication because you want a drink.

## Can I take tenofovir if I am pregnant or breastfeeding?

- The safety of using tenofovir during pregnancy, breastfeeding and in children are not known at this time, please consult your doctor about taking medication.
- 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 tenofovir?

- Keep your appointments with your doctor to check your blood regularly. Since tenofovir is metabolized by your kidney, tests on your kidney's function should be done regularly.
- Make sure you have a continuous supply of the medication.
- Tenofovir does not kill the virus or cure AIDS. It also does not prevent the transmission of HIV, so please remember to always take precautions if you are having sex (e.g. use latex condoms) or using drugs (e.g. use clean syringes).

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**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.**



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