



HIV Drug Information



Indinavir (Crixivan)

Why am I given indinavir as my medication?

- Indinavir (also called Crixivan) is a drug used in combination with other medications to treat HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) infection.
- Indinavir 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?

- Indinavir comes in 200 mg and 400 mg capsules.
- The usual dose of indinavir is 800 mg every 8 hours. A different dosage may be used depending on what other medications you are taking.
- Indinavir should be taken on an empty stomach (1 hour before or 2 hours after food).
- Avoid taking indinavir with meals high in fat, protein or calories. This will make the medication much less effective. If you are really hungry when you are taking indinavir, you can have a light snack (for example, dry toast with juice or corn flakes with skim milk) before taking the medication.



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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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- ☛ It is important to drink at least 1.5 litres (10 glasses) of water a day to prevent the formation of kidney stones when you are taking indinavir. Drink more water if the weather is hot, if you exercise, if you are feverish or if you drink alcohol, coffee, cola or tea that contains caffeine.
- ☛ Indinavir should be stored at room temperature in a dry place. Store it in its original container. 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 indinavir?

The most serious side effect of indinavir is:

- ☛ Kidney stones — symptoms may include abdominal and back pain, painful urination, blood in the urine and fever. Drinking more than 1.5 litres of water a day will help prevent kidney stones.
- ☛ Other side effects can include:
 - stomach upset
 - nausea
 - taste changes
 - diarrhea
 - dizziness
 - dry skin or rash
 - fatigue
- ☛ Longer-term side effects of indinavir may include:



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- an 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 arms and legs and face)
- ☛ Consult your doctor or pharmacist if you have these side effects. Do not stop the medication or change the dose before you talk with them.

Can I take indinavir with other medications?

- ☛ Indinavir can interact with other drugs. It is important that you tell your doctor and pharmacist about all the prescription and non-prescription medications (including vitamins and herbs) you are taking.
- ☛ Indinavir should not be taken with the following drugs:
- Halcion (triazolam)
 - Versed (midazolam)
 - Rifampin
 - Hismanal (astemizole)
 - Seldane (terfenadine)
 - Prepulse (cisapride)
- ☛ Indinavir should be taken at least 1 hour apart from ddl.
- ☛ If you are taking indinavir with any of the following drugs, the dose of indinavir will need to be adjusted:
- Sustiva (efavirenz)
 - Viramune (nevirapine)
 - Nizoral (ketoconazole)
 - Mycobutin (rifabutin)

Can I take indinavir with alcohol or street drugs?

- ☛ Minimize drinking alcohol if you are on indinavir. Alcohol can make you lose water and increase your risk of developing kidney stones.



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- ☛ Indinavir may interact with street drugs. Consult your doctor and pharmacist if you are using street drugs so they can advise you about the necessary precautions.

Can I take indinavir if I am pregnant or breast-feeding?

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

What other precautions do I need to know when taking indinavir?

- ☛ Keep your appointments with your physician for blood tests to check your liver, pancreas and kidney function, blood sugar, and cholesterol and triglyceride levels regularly.
- ☛ Make sure you have a continuous supply of the medication.
- ☛ Indinavir 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).

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