

# TENOFOVIR

**Other NAMES:** Viread®

Tenofovir is also a part of these combination products:

- Truvada® (tenofovir, emtricitabine)
- Atripla® (efavirenz, emtricitabine, tenofovir)

## WHY is this drug prescribed?

Tenofovir is an antiretroviral (anti-HIV) drug that is part of the nucleotide reverse transcriptase inhibitor family. It is used together with other antiretrovirals to delay the progression of HIV infection. By doing this, your immune system should improve (increase in CD4<sup>+</sup> count) and you will be better protected against infections.

Tenofovir does not cure AIDS or completely kill the HIV virus, but helps to prevent further damage by slowing down the production of new viruses. Treatment with tenofovir does not reduce the risk of passing infection on to others. You will still be able to pass HIV by sexual contact, by blood transfer or by sharing needles. You should always use appropriate precautions to prevent passing HIV on to others.

## HOW should this drug be taken?

Generally, the dose of tenofovir is 300 mg (1 tablet) once a day. Tenofovir should be taken with food. Your dosage is:

300 mg tablet

\_\_\_ tablet (\_\_\_mg) once a day

## What should you do if you FORGET a dose?

If you miss a dose of tenofovir, take it as soon as possible. However, if it is time for your next dose, do not double the dose, just carry on with your regular schedule.

## Why should you not forget to take this drug?

If you miss doses of tenofovir, the amount of HIV virus in your blood (known as the viral load) will start increasing again and your immune system will be further damaged. A few missed doses can be enough for tenofovir to stop being active. A phenomenon known as **resistance**. When this happens, other antiretrovirals that work in a similar way as tenofovir may also become inactive. **Therefore, missing doses of tenofovir can decrease treatment options for the future.** Even if you do not feel well, you should always take your doses of

tenofovir. Please do not stop tenofovir without talking to your doctor first.

## What ADVERSE EFFECTS can this drug cause? What should you do about them?

Most adverse effects reported with tenofovir are mild, and may include headache, diarrhea, intestinal gas, nausea and vomiting. If these effects occur and are bothersome, please discuss this with your doctor or pharmacist.

Rare adverse effects that have been observed are increases in liver and muscle enzymes, as well as minor kidney damage. Blood tests must be done regularly to look for these adverse effects.

The long-term effects of tenofovir are unknown at this time. As more people use tenofovir for longer periods of time, other adverse effects may occur.

**It is important that you keep your doctor appointments and come for your laboratory tests so that your progress can be followed.**

## What other PRECAUTIONS should you follow while using this drug?

You must make sure that you are taking the right dose. If you take higher doses of tenofovir than what is prescribed, you

may increase the chance of having adverse effects. If you take lower doses of tenofovir than what is prescribed, the HIV virus may become resistant to tenofovir.

Certain drugs can increase or decrease the effect of tenofovir. Also, tenofovir might influence the effect of other drugs you are taking, such as didanosine (Videx EC®) or atazanavir (Reyataz®). In such cases, some of your drug doses may need to be adjusted.

Tenofovir should not be given together with adefovir (Hepsera®).

Inform your doctor and pharmacist of all prescribed and non-prescribed drugs you are taking. As well, you should inform them of natural products you are taking. If you wish to start a new drug or natural product, please consult with your pharmacist before doing so.

Please inform your doctor if you are pregnant. Your doctor can recommend the appropriate treatment to help to reduce the risk of passing the HIV virus on to your baby. Breastfeeding is NOT recommended if you have HIV as you can transmit the virus to your baby through your breast milk.

### **How should this drug be STORED?**

Tenofovir tablets should be stored in a cool (15-30°C) dry place, protected from

light and well out of the reach of children. Ensure that the drug has not expired by checking the expiry date ("EXP") shown on the outside of the package.

Do not store in your bathroom or kitchen, as heat and moisture may cause the drug to be less active.

**If you have any questions or concerns about this drug or if you are experiencing adverse effects, please discuss them with your pharmacist, doctor or nurse.**

**Write questions or concerns down to ensure they are addressed.**

The following pharmacist is available to answer questions:

**Pharmacist:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

Reference: Product Monograph Viread™ (tenofovir disoproxil fumarate). Foster City, CA, USA: Gilead Sciences, 2009. Prepared by the Ontario HIV Pharmacy Professional Specialty Group, updated 2009.

Additional medication fact sheets and updates may be found at: [www.hivclinic.ca](http://www.hivclinic.ca)

# ***TENOFOVIR***

## ***MEDICATION***

### ***FACT SHEET***