

# ATOVAQUONE SUSPENSION

**Other names: Mepron®**

## **WHY is this drug prescribed?**

Atovaquone is used to treat *Pneumocystis carinii* pneumonia (PCP) or to prevent this infection. It can also be used to treat toxoplasmosis gondii (brain lesions caused by a parasite) or cryptosporidial diarrhea.

## **HOW should this drug be taken?**

Atovaquone is available as a fruit-flavoured liquid. Shake the bottle gently before use.

The usual dosage of atovaquone suspension is 750mg (1 teaspoon or 5ml) two times daily or 1500 mg (2 teaspoons or 10 ml) once daily. Depending on the infection that is being treated, higher doses may be needed.

It is important that you take atovaquone with a **high-fat meal** to make sure that it is fully absorbed into the body.

Your dosage is:

150 mg / mL oral suspension

\_\_\_\_mL (\_\_\_\_mg) \_\_\_\_ times a day

Take atovaquone for the duration of time it is prescribed. If you stop it earlier, your infection may come back. If the infection worsens or persists, consult your doctor.

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

If you miss a dose of atovaquone, 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.

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

Atovaquone is generally well tolerated. Occasionally, atovaquone may cause a number of adverse effects such as **cough, diarrhea, headache, nausea, vomiting, and trouble sleeping**. If these effects occur, they may go away during treatment as your body adjusts to the drug. However, talk with your doctor if any of these effects become bothersome.

**Fever or skin rash** may occur. If these effects do happen, you should talk with your doctor immediately.

**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?**

Atovaquone suspension may cause a yellow staining of clothing so care should be taken to avoid spillage.

Certain drugs can increase or decrease the effect of atovaquone. For example, rifabutin (Mycobutin®) or rifampin (Rifadin®, Rofact®) should not be taken together with atovaquone. Also, atovaquone might influence the effect of other drugs you are taking. 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.

The safety of atovaquone has not been established during pregnancy or breastfeeding. Please discuss this with your doctor or pharmacist if this is a concern.

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

Atovaquone suspension should be stored in a cool (15-25°C) dry place, protected from light and well out of the reach of children. **DO NOT FREEZE**. 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 Mepron® (atovaquone). Mississauga, ON, Canada, GlaxoSmithKline, 2008. Prepared by the Ontario HIV Pharmacy Professional Specialty Group, 2003. Reviewed 2009.

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

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