

CIDOFOVIR

Other NAMES: Vistide®

WHY is this drug prescribed?

Cidofovir is an antiviral used for the treatment of cytomegalovirus (CMV) infection (ie: retinitis). The drug is also used to prevent a relapse of CMV after the initial treatment of the infection. You should have your eyes examined regularly.

HOW should this drug be taken?

Cidofovir is given intravenously every week for two weeks and then on alternating weeks for an indefinite period of time. The protocol for cidofovir administration is as follows:

- 2000 mg oral dose of probenecid (Benuryl™) (4 x 500 mg tablets) three hours prior to cidofovir
- 1 liter infusion of normal saline one hour prior to cidofovir
- Cidofovir infusion over one hour. The appropriate dose will depend on your weight and kidney function.
- While cidofovir is infusing, another liter of normal saline may be given over 1 to 3 hours.
- 1000 mg (2 x 500 mg tablets) of probenecid (Benuryl™) 2 hours after the cidofovir infusion is completed
- 1000 mg (2 x 500 mg tablets) of probenecid (Benuryl™) 8 hours after the cidofovir infusion is completed.

What should you do if you FORGET to receive a dose?

Cidofovir will likely be given at a clinic by an experienced nurse. Ensure that you do not miss your appointment to receive your dose of cidofovir. Missing doses of cidofovir may cause your CMV infection to come back or worsen. If you have missed an appointment, call your clinic immediately to rebook an appointment to receive your dose as soon as possible.

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

The most serious and commonly reported adverse effect of intravenous cidofovir is **kidney toxicity**. Your kidney status will be checked the day before you receive an infusion of cidofovir. If measurements of serum creatinine and protein in your urine are not within acceptable limits, your doctor will either reduce your dose or discontinue therapy. Hydration with normal saline and administration of oral probenecid (Benuryl™) help to reduce the risk of kidney toxicity.

Cidofovir can also cause **a fall in the number of white blood cells**. This can increase your risk of developing infections as white blood cells are needed to fight infections. Cidofovir can also **decrease platelets**. This can increase your risk of bleeding or bruising as platelets are needed to help your blood clot. Your **red blood cells may also decrease** which could make you feel tired or short of breath. Blood tests will be done regularly to check for any changes in these values. If there are any serious problems, cidofovir will be stopped. Please Inform your doctor if you notice any symptoms of fever, chills, shortness of breath, rapid heartbeat, fatigue, bleeding or bruising.

Nausea, diarrhea, fatigue, fever, hair loss, and muscle pain can also occur as a result of cidofovir therapy. If these effects persist and are

bothersome, please call your doctor or pharmacist.

Some adverse effects experienced by patients treated with cidofovir may be related to **probenecid (Benuryl™)**. These adverse effects are skin rash, nausea, vomiting, headache, chills and fever. Eating food before taking probenecid helps reduce the risk of nausea and vomiting. Patients who experience a skin rash or itchiness are usually given an antihistamine to reduce symptoms. Inform your doctor if you experience intolerable adverse effects.

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?

Before starting cidofovir, please inform your doctor if you are allergic to cidofovir, probenecid (Benuryl™) or any sulfa drug (Bactrim®, Septra®).

If while handling the drug, it accidentally spills, avoid contact with your skin, eyes, or mucous membranes (eg. nose). Wear rubber gloves while cleaning up any spills. If the drug comes in contact with your skin or mucous membranes, wash the area thoroughly with soap and water, and rinse thoroughly with water.

The duration of treatment with cidofovir is indefinite. This is true even if you begin to feel your vision is improving.

It is important to tell your doctor if you are pregnant. Cidofovir may cause birth defects to your unborn child and should be used only if the risks of not treating CMV are greater than the risks to your child.

If you are a woman with childbearing potential, you should always use appropriate contraceptive methods (birth control pill, condom) to avoid

becoming pregnant while you are taking cidofovir and for 1 month following the end of the cidofovir treatment. If you are a man, you should use a condom during treatment with cidofovir and for at least 3 months following the end of the treatment. In general, even if you are not taking cidofovir, the use of condoms is always recommended to decrease the risk of passing HIV on to others.

When given with cidofovir, many drugs may increase the risk of developing adverse effects. Inform your doctor and pharmacist if you are taking the following drugs:

- aminoglycoside antibiotics (gentamicin, tobramycin, amikacin, etc.)
- amphotericin B (Fungizone®, Abelcet®, Ambisome®)
- foscarnet (Foscavir®)
- intravenous pentamidine (Pentacarinat®)
- non-steroidal anti-inflammatory agents (NSAIDs), e.g., ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®), naproxen (Naprosyn®)
- vancomycin
- zidovudine (Retrovir®)

Probenecid (Benuryl™) may also interfere with many drugs.

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.

How should this drug be STORED?

If you are to receive the cidofovir treatment at home, the diluted cidofovir intravenous solution should be kept in the refrigerator (2 - 8°C). It is recommended that the solution be used within 24 hours of dilution. Keep well out of the reach of children.

About an hour before your treatment, remove a bag from the refrigerator and let it warm to room temperature. Check your bag to ensure that there are no leaks and that there are no solid particles in the solution. The solution should be clear and colorless. If not, you should not use the bag.

Probenecid (Benuryl®) tablets should be kept in a cool (15-30°C) dry place, protected from light and well out of the reach of children.

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: Cidofovir (Vistide®) Prescribing Information. Gilead Sciences, Foster City, CA, USA, September 2000. 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

CIDOFOVIR

MEDICATION

FACT SHEET