

ETHAMBUTOL

Other NAMES: Etibi®, Myambutol®

WHY is this drug prescribed?

Ethambutol is an antibiotic that eliminates the bacteria that cause tuberculosis (TB). It is generally used in combination with other drugs to treat TB. It can also be given to treat mycobacterium avium complex (MAC) infection.

HOW should this drug be taken?

Ethambutol is commercially available as 100 mg or 400 mg blue tablets. It is usually taken once a day. The suggested dose is based on your weight. The dose may need to be adjusted if you have kidney problems.

Your dosage is:

100 mg tablet

400 mg tablet

___tablet(s)(___mg)___times a day

Ethambutol can be taken with or without food. However, if you have nausea or stomach upset, it may be preferable to take it with food.

Ethambutol must be taken regularly to be effective and to prevent the

development of resistance. Take all of your doses even if you begin to feel better.

What should you do if you FORGET a dose?

If you miss a dose of ethambutol, 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?

Ethambutol can sometimes cause **nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite, headaches, dizziness, and confusion**. If these effects are bothersome, please call your doctor or pharmacist.

Rarely, ethambutol can cause temporary **vision problems**. Your vision may decrease or may become blurry and you may have problems with your color vision. Ideally, your vision should be tested before starting ethambutol and on a regular basis while you are receiving this drug. Please notify your doctor if you detect changes in your vision.

Ethambutol rarely causes **tingling or numbness in the hands and feet**. It can also cause joint pain and an

increased risk of having gout (uric acid deposits in the joints) if you are already prone to having these problems. Inform your doctor if these symptoms appear.

Your doctor will do regular blood tests to verify your blood, your uric acid level, as well as your liver and kidney function.

Rarely, an **allergic reaction** with symptoms such as **rash, skin itchiness, and fever** may occur. If these effects appear, please contact your doctor.

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 taking ethambutol, tell your doctor if you have ever received this drug in the past and if you have developed adverse effects such as an allergic reaction or vision problems.

Also, inform your doctor if you have a history of gout, eye problems, kidney or liver disease.

This drug is usually safe when taken with most other drugs. However, 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.

Ethambutol is considered to be generally safe if you are pregnant or breastfeeding. However, please inform your doctor or pharmacist if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.

How should this drug be STORED?

Ethambutol 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: _____

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MEDICATION

FACT SHEET

Reference: Product Monograph. Etibi® (ethambutol). Montréal, Qc, Canada: ICN Canada Ltd., 2001. 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