

# RIFAMPIN

**Other NAMES:** rifampicin, Rifadin®, Rofact™, Rifater® (contains a fixed combination of rifampin, isoniazid, and pyrazinamide)

## WHY is this drug prescribed?

Rifampin is an antibacterial drug used in combination with other drugs to treat tuberculosis (TB).

Rifampin may also be used to treat other types of infections.

## HOW should this drug be taken?

Rifampin is available as 150mg and 300mg capsules. The capsules should be swallowed whole and should be taken 1 hour before or 2 hours after a meal with a full glass of water.

The usual adult dose for the treatment of tuberculosis is 600 mg once daily. This dose may need to be decreased based on your weight or if you have liver problems.

Your dosage is:

150 mg capsule

300 mg capsule

\_\_capsule(s)(\_\_mg)\_\_time(s) daily

In patients who have problems absorbing the oral form of rifampin, the intravenous form of rifampin may be used. The intravenous form of rifampin is an investigational drug in Canada.

Rifampin 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 rifampin, 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?

The most common adverse effects of rifampin are **heartburn, nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite, stomach cramps, gas, and diarrhea.** Although rifampin works best on an empty stomach, adverse stomach effects may be relieved by taking it with a snack. If these effects remain bothersome, please call your doctor or pharmacist.

Occasionally, other adverse effects such as **headache, drowsiness, fatigue, dizziness, confusion, muscle weakness, pain and numbness in the arms and legs, and fever** have been noted. Changes in a woman's **menstrual cycle** (longer periods, spotting, longer intervals between periods) can also occur. Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist if these symptoms appear.

Rifampin causes a **red-orange discolouration** of urine, stools, saliva, lung secretions, sweat, tears, and skin. This adverse effect does not usually require medical attention. However, if you wear contact lenses, you may consider wearing glasses instead to prevent discolouration of your contact lenses.

Rifampin can **increase liver enzymes.** This usually does not give any symptoms. Rarely, **hepatitis** (an inflammation of the liver) can

occur. Signs of hepatitis are yellowing of the eyes and skin, dark urine, fever, nausea and / or vomiting, pale stools, fatigue, and abdominal pain. Inform your doctor if these symptoms appear. Your doctor will do regular blood tests to verify your liver function.

Serious effects of rifampin that may occur include **neutropenia and leukopenia** (a reduced number of white blood cells so that you have a higher risk of bacterial infection), or **anemia** (a reduced number of red blood cells that can make you feel tired and short of breath). In rare cases it can also cause **thrombocytopenia** (a reduced number of platelets so that you bleed or bruise more easily). Blood tests will be done regularly to check for any changes in these values. Inform your doctor or pharmacist if you have symptoms such as fever, chills, shortness of breath, racing heartbeat, fatigue, bleeding or bruising.

Rarely, you can develop an allergic reaction to rifampin. If you have skin redness (rash) and itchiness, 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 starting rifampin, please inform your doctor if you have kidney or liver problems.

This drug can interact with other drugs, especially those that are eliminated by the liver. Drugs that may interact include:

- clarithromycin (Biaxin®)
- delavirdine (Rescriptor®)
- fluconazole (Diflucan™)
- itraconazole (Sporanox®)

- ketoconazole (Nizoral®)
  - phenytoin (Dilantin™)
  - protease inhibitors
    - atazanavir (Reyataz®)
    - darunavir (Prezista®)
    - indinavir (Crixivan®)
    - lopinavir / ritonavir (Kaletra®)
    - nelfinavir (Viracept®)
    - ritonavir (Norvir®)
    - saquinavir (Invirase®)
    - tipranavir (Aptivus®)
  - warfarin (Coumadin®)
- etc.

Many other drugs can interfere with rifampin. As well, rifampin may decrease the effect of other 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.

The efficacy of birth control pills or other hormones used to prevent becoming pregnant may decrease if you are taking rifampin. An alternative or additional method of contraception, such as condoms, should be used.

In order to limit any liver problems, you should avoid alcohol if you are taking rifampin.

Rifampin should NOT be used if you are pregnant, unless your doctor believes the benefits outweigh the risks. Please discuss this with your doctor or pharmacist if this is a concern. Also, you should NOT breastfeed if you are taking rifampin.

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

Rifampin 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. Rifadin® (rifampin). Laval, Qc, Canada: Aventis Pharma Inc., 2002. 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)

# ***RIFAMPIN***

## ***MEDICATION***

## ***FACT SHEET***