

## ITRACONAZOLE

**Other names:** Sporanox®

### WHY is this drug prescribed?

Itraconazole is an antifungal drug. It is used to treat fungal infections in the mouth (like thrush), the esophagus, the genital tract (like a yeast infection) and other areas. It may also be used to prevent cryptococcal meningitis (brain fungal infection) or other types of fungal infections from recurring.

### HOW should this drug be taken?

Itraconazole is available in 100 mg capsules and a 10 mg / mL oral suspension.

The dose of itraconazole will depend on the type of infection that is being treated. It is usually given once or twice daily.

Itraconazole **capsules** should be taken immediately after a full meal. Itraconazole **oral solution** should be taken without food. Avoid taking an antacid (Maalox®, Tums®, etc) or didanosine (Videx™) at the same time as the itraconazole **capsules**, since an acid environment in the stomach is necessary for itraconazole to be well absorbed. If you need to take antacids or didanosine (Videx™), it should be taken at least 1 hour before or 2 hours after the itraconazole capsules.

If you are taking anti-ulcer drugs that can decrease the acidity of the stomach [ranitidine (Zantac®), famotidine (Pepcid®), pantoprazole (Pantoloc™), lansoprazole (Prevacid®), omeprazole (Losec®), rabeprazole (Pariet®), esomeprazole (Nexium™)], absorption may be improved by taking itraconazole **capsules** with a carbonated cola drink or cranberry juice.

Your dosage is:

100 mg capsule

\_\_\_\_ capsule(s) (\_\_\_\_ mg) \_\_\_\_ time(s) a day

or

10 mg / mL oral solution

\_\_\_\_ mL (\_\_\_\_ mg) \_\_\_\_ time(s) a day

**Swish in the mouth then swallow**

Take itraconazole 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 itraconazole, 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?**

**Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, headache, and dizziness** commonly occur and should go away as your body adjusts to the drug. If they become bothersome, call your doctor or pharmacist.

Itraconazole may cause **increases in various tests measuring liver function**. These changes serve as a signal to watch for liver damage. If you experience **unusual fatigue, yellowing of eyes and skin, nausea, vomiting, dark urine, or pale stool**, call your doctor or pharmacist. Itraconazole may cause the **potassium** in your body to drop. This may cause **unusual tiredness or weakness in limbs**. If you experience these symptoms, call your doctor or pharmacist. An allergic reaction to itraconazole is possible but rare. Symptoms of an allergic reaction include **fever, skin rash or itching**. Call your doctor or pharmacist if these occur.

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

Certain drugs can increase or decrease the effect of itraconazole. Also, itraconazole 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.

**You should NOT take the following drugs if your doctor has prescribed itraconazole:**

- Astemizole (Hismanal®)
- Cisapride (Prepulsid®)
- Dofetilide
- Eletriptan
- Ergot alkaloids such as dihydroergotamine, ergometrine (ergonovine), ergotamine and methylethergometrine (methylethergonovine)
- Levomethadyl
- Lovastatin (Mevacor®)
- Oral Midazolam (Versed®)
- Nisoldipine
- Pimozide (Orap®)
- Quinidine (Biquin Durules®)
- Terfenadine (Seldane®)
- Simvastatin (Zocor®)
- Triazolam (Halcion®)

Women of childbearing potential should take itraconazole ONLY if they are using an effective form of birth control (condom, birth control pill).

Itraconazole should not be used in pregnant women. Also, breastfeeding is NOT recommended while you are taking

this drug. Please discuss this with your doctor or pharmacist if this is a concern.

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

Itraconazole capsules and oral solution should be stored at room temperature in a cool (15-25°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 Sporanox® (itraconazole). Toronto, ON, Canada: Janssen-Ortho Inc, 2008. Prepared by the Ontario HIV Pharmacy Professional Specialty Group, 2003. Updated 2009.

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

# ***ITRACONAZOLE***

## ***MEDICATION***

## ***FACT SHEET***