

AMPRENAVIR (AGENERASE)

USE:

Amprenavir is an antiretroviral drug in a class called protease inhibitors. It is used in combination with other antiretroviral drugs in the treatment of HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) infections.

Amprenavir is not a cure for HIV.

AVAILABLE AS: 50 and 150 milligram (mg) capsules; Oral liquid as 15mg/ml.



HOW TO USE THIS MEDICATION:

Take this medication exactly as directed by your doctor. Do not stop taking this medication on your own without first consulting a physician. Normal adult dosing for this medication is 1200mg (eight 150mg capsules) twice a day as close to twelve hours apart as possible. Dosing for children is based on weight and will be determined by your doctor. Amprenavir should not be used in patients less than 4 years of age. Amprenavir may be taken with or without food but should not be taken with food high in fat. Take amprenavir with a full glass of water.

The liquid and capsules cannot be used interchangeably because they work differently in your body. If the liquid form of amprenavir is being used, use a measuring spoon or cup to get the most accurate dose.

Store your medication (capsules or liquid) in a cool, dry place away from excessive heat, cold, light or moisture. Always keep medication out of the reach of children.

It is very important to take every dose of your medication in order for it to work correctly. If you do miss a dose of amprenavir, take it as soon as you remember if it is within 4 hours of your dose. If it has been longer than four hours after you were supposed to take your medication, skip it and take your next dose at the regular time. Do not take two doses at once. If you think you may have taken too much of your medication, contact your local poison control center or emergency room right away.

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Do not take amprenavir if you have had a prior allergic reaction to amprenavir (Agenerase) or any of its components. Also, do not take amprenavir if you are taking cisapride (Propulsid), pimozide (Orap), bepridil (Vasacor), ergotamine (Cafergot), dihydroergotamine (D.H.E.), midazolam (Versed) or triazolam (Halcion). Amprenavir liquid should not be taken by children under 4 years of age, pregnant women, or people who have liver or kidney failure or who are using disulfuram (Antabuse) or metronidazole (Flagyl). Always check with your doctor or pharmacist before starting new medications.

SIDE EFFECTS:

Side effects that may go away with time include mild nausea, diarrhea, or stomach pain; mild skin rash; changes in taste and itching. You may also experience changes in body fat. This may include loss of fat from the face, legs and arms or increased fat in the upper back, neck, breast and abdomen. Talk to your doctor about ways to manage these side effects with diet, exercise or medication. Tell your doctor if you experience depression, changes in mood, tingling sensation around your mouth or other areas of numbness or

tingling. Amprenavir may also increase some blood levels in your body. Blood sugar levels, liver enzymes, cholesterol and/or triglycerides may increase while taking this medication. Make sure you keep all of your appointments for blood work so your doctor can monitor for these side effects.

Warning: Contact your doctor immediately if you experience any of the conditions listed below. Stop taking amprenavir immediately and seek medical attention if you experience an allergic reaction (difficulty breathing; closing of the throat; swelling of the lips, tongue or face; hives; or a rash with blisters). Also call your doctor immediately if you experience any of the following: decrease in how often or how much you urinate; fast heartbeat or fast, shallow breathing; increased hunger or thirst, increased urination, or unexplained weight loss; seizures; or unusual bleeding, including gums, nosebleeds, or bloody dark urine. Make sure your doctor knows if you have diabetes, liver disease, kidney disease, hemophilia, problems with digestion, heart rhythm problems, depression, or a sulfa drug allergy before using amprenavir. Do not drink alcohol while taking amprenavir because it may increase the risk of side effects.

Notify your doctor if you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant or breastfeeding. Amprenavir's effects on an unborn baby are still unclear. Do not use the oral liquid amprenavir if you are pregnant. People with HIV should never breastfeed because of the risk of transmitting HIV to the infant.

This medication does not prevent the transmission of HIV to other people. Make sure you understand and practice safe sex and do not share needles with anyone.

DRUG INTERACTIONS:

Amprenavir is broken down by the liver. This means many drugs can interact with your medication. Do not take amprenavir with the medications listed under "contraindications." The following medications need to be monitored with blood tests if taken with amprenavir: Amiodarone (Cordarone), quinidine, warfarin (Coumadin), lidocaine, amitriptyline (Elavil), imipramine (Tofranil), cyclosporine (Sandimmune or Neoral), tacrolimus (Prograf), rapamycin or sirolimus (Rapamune). The following medication might need to have an adjusted dose if taken with amprenavir: Rifabutin (Mycobutin), ritonavir (Norvir), and sildenafil (Viagra). If you are taking ritonavir (Norvir) with amprenavir, talk to your doctor before using flecainide (Tambocor) or propafenone (Rhythmol). Other medications your doctor needs to know if you are taking include methadone, delavirdine (Rescriptor), bepridil (Vascor), rifampin (Rifadin, Rifamate), lovastatin (Mevacor), simvastatin (Zocor), atorvastatin (Lipitor), Phenobarbital, carbamazepine (Tegretol, Carbatrol), phenytoin (Dilantin), and dexamethasone (Decadron). The over the counter items vitamin E and St. John's wort will interact with amprenavir and should not be taken. Birth control pills may also be ineffective and also lower the amount of amprenavir in your body. Talk to your doctor about other forms of birth control. Antacids and the buffered form of Videx (didanosine) should be taken at least an hour apart from your dose of amprenavir.

This is not a complete list of interactions. Make sure your doctor knows all of the medication you are taking. Also, ask your doctor or pharmacist about any medications including over the counter, herbal, vitamin, and prescription products before using them with amprenavir.

References: see references 5-8