

DELAVIDINE (RESCRIPTOR, DLV)

USE:

Delavirdine is an antiretroviral drug in a class called non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors (NNRTIs). It is used in combination with other antiretroviral drugs to treat HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) infections. This drug is not a cure for HIV.

AVAILABLE AS: 100 and 200 milligram (mg) capsule-shaped tablets

HOW TO USE THIS MEDICATION:

The normal dose for delavirdine is 400mg three times a day. Take the medication exactly as directed by your doctor and do not stop taking it without first consulting a physician. It can be taken with or without food. Some people have a condition called achlorhydria where they have a low amount of acid in their stomach. This population should take delavirdine with an acidic beverage such as orange or cranberry juice. Also, avoid taking delavirdine within an hour of antacids or medications that contain antacids (ie: Videx).

The 100mg tablets may be dissolved in 3 ounces (approximately one third of a cup or 90ml) of water. Stir this mixture and drink it right away. Rinse the glass with water and drink it in order to get any remaining drug.

It is important to take every dose of delavirdine. If a dose is missed, it should be taken as soon as possible unless it is close to your next dose. 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.

This medication should be stored in a cool, dry place. Avoid storing this medication in extreme heat, cold or moisture. Always keep medication out of the reach of children.

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Do not take delavirdine if you have had an allergic reaction to delavirdine (Rescriptor) or any of its components. Delavirdine also should not be taken with certain medications as listed under “drug interactions.”

SIDE EFFECTS:

Side effects that may go away with time include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, headache, fatigue and skin rash. Skin rash is the most common side effect with delavirdine. Most of these cases can be treated by your doctor with steroids or antihistamines and will eventually subside.

Warning: Contact your doctor immediately if you experience any of the symptoms listed below. Call your doctor immediately if you experience a rash that accompanies a general ill feeling, fever, muscle or joint aches, blisters, mouth sores, inflamed eyelids, swelling of the face, tiredness, or trouble breathing. If you stop treatment because of this side effect, delavirdine should never be re-started. Report any changes in your health to your doctor. Also, tell your doctor if you have liver disease before taking delavirdine.

Notify your doctor if you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant or breastfeeding. Delavirdine's effects on an unborn baby are still unclear. 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:

The following drugs should not be taken with delavirdine: astemizole (Hismanal), terfenadine (Seldane), dihydroergotamine, ergonovine, ergotamine, methylergonovine, cisapride (Propulsid), pimozone (Orap), alprazolam (Xanax), midazolam (Versed), triazolam (Halcion), and rifabutin (Mycobutin).

Other drugs should be used with extreme caution because they may increase the risk of side effects. These include quinidine, clarithromycin (Biaxin), dapsone, amlodipine (Norvasc), felodipine (Plendil), isradipine (DynaCirc), nifedipine (Procardia, Adalat), fluoxetine (Prozac), sildenafil (Viagra), ketoconazole (Nizoral), and the herbal supplement St. John's wort (*hypericum perforatum*). The cholesterol lowering medications lovastatin (Mevacor) and Simvastatin (Zocor) should be used with caution because the risk of a severe side effect called rhabdomyolysis is increased. Look for signs of muscle pain or soreness when using these medications with delavirdine.

Some medications may decrease the effects of delavirdine and keep it from working as well. These medications are carbamazepine (Tegretol), phenytoin (Dilantin), phenobarbital, rifampin (Rifadin), cimetidine (Tagamet), famotidine (Pepcid), nizatidine (Axid) and ranitidine (Zantac). Also tell your doctor if you are taking warfarin (Coumadin), indinavir (Crixivan) or saquinavir (Invirase) because your dose of these medications may need to be adjusted.

Didanosine buffered tablets (Videx) and antacids should be separated from your dose of delavirdine by at least one hour because they will decrease the acidity of your stomach and lessen the absorption of your medication into your system.

Delavirdine may not be as effective in patients who have unsuccessfully taken efavirenz (Sustiva) or nevirapine (Viramune), the other two medications in the class of drugs called NNRTIs. This decreased effectiveness is a result of a mutation in the genetic structure of HIV that makes the virus resistant to these medications.

Make sure your doctor is aware of any medications you are using or considering using including over the counter items, herbals, vitamins and prescription products.

References: see references 12-15