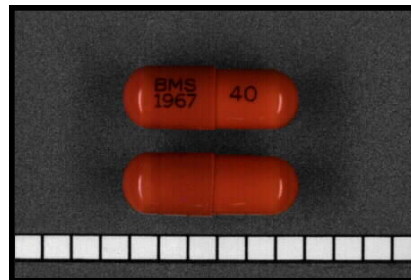


STAVUDINE (ZERIT, d4T)

USE:

Stavudine is an antiretroviral drug in a class called Nucleoside Reverse Transcriptase Inhibitors (NRTIs). 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: 15, 20, 30, and 40 milligram capsules; oral solution as 1mg/ml (must be mixed by pharmacist)



HOW TO USE THIS MEDICATION:

Take this medication exactly as directed by your doctor. Do not stop taking it on your own without first consulting a doctor. Dosing for stavudine is dependent on the person's body weight. Your doctor will determine this dose for you. This dose may be adjusted if you have kidney problems. This medication is usually taken twice daily as close to 12 hours apart as possible. It can be taken with or without food and should be taken with plenty of water. If you miss a dose of your medication, take it as soon as you remember 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. Your doctor will probably want you to have occasional blood tests while you are taking stavudine.

The oral liquid form of this medicine should be shaken well before each dose. Measure each dose with a marked measuring spoon or cup. The liquid form of stavudine should be kept in the refrigerator and thrown away after 30 days. Store the capsules at room temperature in a cool, dry place away from excessive heat, cold, light or moisture. Always keep medication out of the reach of children.

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Do not use stavudine if you have had a prior allergic reaction to stavudine (Zerit) or any of the components of the medication.

SIDE EFFECTS:

Side effects that may go away with time include headache, mild skin rash, mild fever and chills, mild nausea, loss of appetite, and vomiting or diarrhea. Also you may experience a redistribution of body fat. You may notice increased fat around the neck, breasts, trunk, and upper back and decreased fat in the arm, legs and face. Talk to your doctor about ways to manage these side effects with diet, exercise, or medication. Another rare side effect is blood disorders. Your doctor will want you to have occasional blood tests to rule out these side effects.

Warning: Contact your doctor immediately if you experience any of the conditions listed below. Stop taking stavudine and seek medical attention right away if you believe

you are having an allergic reaction (difficulty breathing; closing of the throat; swelling of the lips, tongue, or face; or hives). A condition called peripheral neuropathy (nerve damage) is one of the major side effects of stavudine. If you experience numbness, tingling, burning or pain in the hands or feet, contact your physician immediately because these are symptoms of nerve damage. Stavudine has been associated with serious cases of pancreatitis (inflammation of the pancreas), especially when taken with didanosine (Videx). Signs of this condition include persistent nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and abdominal pain. Other serious side effects associated with this class of drugs are lactic acidosis and liver problems. Nausea; vomiting; unusual stomach discomfort or pain; weakness; feeling cold; feeling dizzy or lightheaded; shortness of breath; slow or irregular heartbeat and yellowing of the skin or eyes can all be signs of lactic acidosis or liver disease and should be reported immediately. There is also an increased chance of this side effect when stavudine and didanosine (Videx) are taken together. Also, tell your doctor right away if you experience unusual bruising or bleeding. Make sure you tell your doctor if you have had any liver problems, kidney problems, blood disorders, or nerve problems in the past before taking stavudine.

Notify your doctor if you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant or breastfeeding. Stavudine'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:

Tell your doctor if you are taking zidovudine (Retrovir), didanosine (Videx), or hydroxyurea (Mylocel). These medications change the effectiveness of stavudine or increase your chances of side effects. Alcohol can increase the chance of developing pancreatitis and should also be avoided.

Ask your doctor or pharmacist about any medications including over the counter, herbal, vitamin, and prescription products before using them with stavudine.

References: see references 54-57