

## **ABACAVIR/LAMIVUDINE/ZIDOVUDINE (TRIZIVIR)**

### **USE:**

Trizivir is a combination antiretroviral medication that has abacavir, lamivudine and zidovudine in it. These three drugs are part of a class of drugs called nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors (NRTIs). Combivir is used alone or in combination with other antiretroviral drugs to treat HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) infections. This drug is not a cure for HIV.

AVAILABLE AS: A single tablet containing 300mg of abacavir, 150mg of lamivudine, and 300mg of zidovudine.

### **HOW TO USE THIS MEDICATION:**

Take this medication exactly as directed by your doctor. Do not stop taking your medication on your own without first consulting a doctor. The normal adult dose is one tablet of Trizivir twice daily as close to 12 hours apart as possible. Trizivir is not recommended for children or people weighing less than 90 pounds. Your doctor will probably want you to have occasional blood tests. Make sure that you don't miss any appointments. Trizivir can be taken with food or on an empty stomach and should be taken with plenty of water.

It is important to take every dose of your medication. 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.

Trizivir should be stored 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.

**WARNING: Fatal allergic reactions have been reported with the use of abacavir, one of the drugs in Trizivir. Immediately call for medical attention and stop taking the medication if you experience symptoms of fever, skin rash, fatigue, difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, cough, or severe gastrointestinal symptoms (abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting). By no means should this medication ever be attempted again if you experience these symptoms. You will be given a card that describes this type of reaction. Carry this card with you at all times.**

### **CONTRAINDICATIONS:**

Do not use Trizivir if you are allergic to abacavir, lamivudine or zidovudine (as Ziagen, Epivir, Retrovir, or Combivir) or any of the components of these medications.

### **SIDE EFFECTS:**

Side effects that will most likely go away with time include mild nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or decreased appetite; headache; weakness or tiredness; dizziness; runny or stuffy nose; cough; or trouble sleeping. Some people will experience a redistribution of body fat. Let your doctor know if you notice loss of fat from the arms, legs, and face or increased fat around the neck, breast and trunk. Talk to your doctor about ways to manage these side effects with diet, exercise or medication

**Warning: Contact your doctor immediately if you experience any of the conditions listed below. Stop taking Trizivir and seek medical attention immediately if you think you are having the allergic reaction described above in “how to use this medication.”** Serious blood problems including anemia or neutropenia may happen while taking zidovudine, one of the medications in Trizivir. Signs that this may be occurring are unusual tiredness, pale skin, sore throat, fever, or chills. Muscle disorders called myopathy may be experienced with zidovudine. Symptoms of this condition are muscle weakness, pain or soreness. A condition called pancreatitis (inflammation of the pancreas) has been associated with this class of drugs. Notify your doctor right away if you develop symptoms of nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain or fever. Trizivir can also cause rare but serious conditions of lactic acidosis and liver problems. Call your doctor immediately if you experience nausea, vomiting, or unusual or unexpected stomach discomfort; weakness or tiredness; shortness of breath; weak arms or legs; yellowing of the skin or eyes; or pain in the upper stomach area. Also notify your doctor if you notice an irregular or slow heartbeat, swelling of the arms or legs, tingling of the hands or feet, unusual bruising or bleeding; or weight gain. Make sure your doctor knows if you have kidney disease, liver disease, bone marrow disease, a weak immune system, hepatitis B, anemia, or low white blood cell counts. Keep all appointments for blood tests so your doctor can monitor for some of these side effects.

Notify your doctor if you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant or breastfeeding. Trizivir’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:**

Some medications may change the way abacavir, lamivudine and zidovudine act in your body. Certain medications may need to be avoided or used with caution. Tell your doctor if you are taking any of the following medications: ganciclovir (Cytovene), interferon-alfa, doxorubicin (Adriamycin), ribavirin (Virazole), methadone, other medications for HIV (Combivir, lamivudine (Epivir), zalcitabine (Hivid), zidovudine (Retrovir), stavudine (Zerit), amprenavir (Agenerase)), or an antibiotic (Bactrim, Septra, etc). Also tell your doctor if you are taking medications that may affect your immune system such as steroids, chemotherapy, or radiation. Alcohol can increase the effects of abacavir and should be avoided.

Do not take other medications that contain abacavir, lamivudine, or zidovudine (Ziagen, Epivir, Retrovir, and Combivir).

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

**References:** see references 58-61