



Drug Information

Indinavir (Crixivan)

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Why am I given indinavir as my medication?

- Indinavir (or Crixivan) is a drug used in combination with other medications to treat HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) infection.
- Indinavir blocks a protein called “Protease”. It belongs to a class of drugs called Protease Inhibitors (PI). The HIV virus needs this protein to reproduce itself, so by blocking it the drug helps slow down HIV disease.
- Taking this medication can reduce the amount of virus in your body. It can also reduce your chance of getting sick from AIDS related illnesses, help you stay healthy longer or get your health back. It may also reduce the damage to your immune system.

How do I take this medication?

- Indinavir comes as 200 mg and 400 mg capsules.
- The usual dose of indinavir is 800 mg every 8 hours. A different dosage may be used depending on what other medications you are prescribed.
- Indinavir should be taken on an empty stomach (1 hours before, or 2 hours after food).
- Avoid taking indinavir with meals high in fat, protein or calories. This will make the medication much less effective. If you are really hungry when you are taking indinavir, you can have a light snack, for example, dry toast with juice; or corn flakes with skim milk before taking the medication.
- It is important to drink at least 1.5 liters (10 glasses) of water a day to prevent formation of kidney stones when you are taking indinavir. Drink more water if the weather is hot, if you exercise, if you are feverish or if you drink alcohol, coffee, cola or tea which contains caffeine.
- Indinavir should be kept at room temperature in a dry place. Store it in its original container. Don't put the medicine in the bathroom or kitchen, as moisture may cause the medicine to lose its effectiveness.
- Keep it out of reach of children.

What if I forget to take a dose?

- Take the dose you missed as soon as possible. However, if it is within 2 hours of your next dose, just continue with your regular schedule, do not double the dose.
- Recent studies have found that for the anti-HIV medications to work, all the medications need to be taken regularly and consistently. Missing or skipping dose of your medication may make it lose its effectiveness as the virus can change and become resistant to the medication.



What are the side effects of indinavir?

The most serious side effect of indinavir is:

- Kidney stones: symptoms may include abdominal and back pain, painful urination, blood in the urine and fever. Drinking more than 1.5 liters of water a day will help prevent kidney stones.
- Other side effects can include:
 - stomach upset
 - nausea
 - taste changes
 - diarrhea
 - dizziness
 - dry skin or rash
 - fatigue.
- Longer term side effects of indinavir can include:
 - increase in the sugar and fat (cholesterol, triglyceride) levels in your blood
 - abnormal body fat distribution (increase in waist and breast size and thinning of the face, arms and legs).

Consult your doctor or pharmacist if you have these side effects. Do not stop the medication or change the dose before you talk to them.

Can I take indinavir with other medications?

- Indinavir can interact with other drugs. It is important that you tell your doctor and pharmacist about all the prescription and non-prescription medications (including vitamins and herbs) you are taking.
- Indinavir should not be taken with:
 - Halcion (triazolam)
 - Versed (midazolam)
 - Rifampin
 - Hismanal (astemizole)
 - Seldane (terfenadine)
 - Prepulsid (cisapride).
- Indinavir should be taken at least 1 hour apart from DDI.
- If you are taking indinavir with either Sustiva (efavirenz), Viramune (nevirapine) Nizoral (ketoconazole) or Mycobutin (rifabutin), the dose of indinavir will need to be adjusted.

Can I take indinavir with alcohol or street drugs?

- Minimize drinking alcohol if you are on indinavir. Alcohol can make you lose water and increase your risk of developing kidney stones.
- Indinavir may interact with other street drugs, consult your doctor and pharmacist if you are using street drugs so they can advise you with the necessary precautions.

Can I take indinavir if I am pregnant or breastfeeding?

- If you are pregnant and wish to take indinavir, please consult your doctor.



- Since the HIV virus can be transmitted through breast milk, breast-feeding is not recommended in HIV positive women.

What other precautions do I need to know when taking indinavir?

- Keep regular appointments with your doctor for tests to check your liver and kidney function, and the sugar and fat levels in your blood.
- Make sure you have a continuous supply of the medication.
- Indinavir does not kill the virus or cure AIDS. It also does not prevent the transmission of HIV, so please remember to always take precautions if you are having sex (use latex condoms) or using drugs (use clean syringes).

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