



# Drug Information

## ATAZANAVIR (Reyataz)

### Why am I given ATAZANAVIR as my medication?

- ATAZANAVIR (also called Reyataz) is a drug used in combination with other medications to treat HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) infection.
- ATAZANAVIR 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?

- ATAZANAVIR comes in 150 mg and 200 mg capsules.
- The usual dose of ATAZANAVIR is 400 mg (2 x 200 mg capsules) once daily when taken as the only protease inhibitor in a regimen. It is also commonly used in combination with another PI called RITONAVIR. When taken together, the dose of ATAZANAVIR is 300 mg and the dose of RITONAVIR is 100 mg, both drugs taken once daily.
- ATAZANAVIR should be taken with food.
- ATAZANAVIR should be kept at room temperature in a dry place. 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 doses of your medication may make it lose its effectiveness as the virus can change itself and become resistant to the medication.

### What are the side effects of ATAZANAVIR?

- Common side effects of ATAZANAVIR include headache, nausea, rash, abdominal pain and yellowing of the skin or whites of the eyes (jaundice).
- It may cause increased liver problems in people with hepatitis B or C.
- Some rare but serious side effects may include arrhythmia (irregular heart beat) and lactic acidosis which would include symptoms of persistent nausea, unexpected tiredness, vomiting and abdominal pain.
- A number of studies have shown that ATAZANAVIR is less likely to cause increased lipid levels (cholesterol and triglycerides) than other Protease Inhibitors.
- Consult your doctor or pharmacist if you have these side effects. Do not stop taking the medications before you talk to them.



### Can I take ATAZANAVIR with other medications?

- ATAZANAVIR 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.
- Some commonly used drugs that ATAZANAVIR should not be taken with include:
  - Crixivan (indinavir)
  - St. John's Wort (*hypericum perforatum*)
  - Sedatives: Halcion (triazolam), Versed (midazolam)
  - Cholesterol lowering drugs: Mevacor (lovastatin), Zocor (simvastatin)
  - Antihistamines: Hismanal (astemizole), Seldane (terfenadine)
  - Antibiotic: Rifadin (rifampin)
  - Heartburn/ anti-reflux medications: Prevacid (lansoprazole), Propulsid (cisapride) Losec (omeprazole), and
  - Migraine medications: Ergomar, Cafegot
- When used together with ddI tablets or antacids, ATAZANAVIR should be taken either 2 hours before or one hour after the ddI tablets or antacids. Other anti-HIV medications' dosage may need to be adjusted if used together with ATAZANAVIR.

### Can I take ATAZANAVIR with alcohol or street drugs?

- It is advisable to avoid excessive amount of alcohol while you are taking ATAZANAVIR. Alcohol may interact with your medications. Do not skip a dose of your medication because you want a drink.
- ATAZANAVIR may also 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 ATAZANAVIR if I am pregnant or breastfeeding?

- ATAZANAVIR is currently not recommended for pregnant women or children.
- Since HIV 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 ATAZANAVIR?

- You should keep your appointments with your physician for blood tests, especially to check on the health of your liver and kidney.
- Make sure you have a continuous supply of the medication.
- ATAZANAVIR 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 (e.g. use latex condoms) or using drugs (e.g. use clean syringes).

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