

ZIDOVUDINE (Retrovir®)

What is Zidovudine used for?

Zidovudine is an antiretroviral agent that blocks construction of virus. It is used to decrease the amount of viruses (viral load) to as low as possible, for as long as possible.

When should I take the medication?

Zidovudine is usually taken 2 to 3 times daily. It is usually given in combination with at least two other antiretroviral agents.

Zidovudine may be given alone to new-born babies of HIV-infected mother to reduce the risk of infection.

How should it be taken?

Zidovudine should be taken on empty stomach (30 minutes before meals or 2 hours after meals).

What should I do if I miss a dose?

Missing doses makes Zidovudine less effective and may also make the virus resistant to Zidovudine and other possible antiretroviral agents.

If you forgot to give your child the medication within 4 hours, give the dose as soon as you remember and then continue to give it as per normal. Otherwise, skip the missed dose give the next dose at the usual time. Do not double or increase the dose.

If your child vomits within 15 minutes of administration, give another dose if possible.

What side effects can this medicine cause? What can I do about them?

Nausea and vomiting are common, and may be prevented by eating small frequent meals or sucking on candy. Headaches and pain can be alleviated with mild painkillers. Other common side effects are anorexia, diarrhoea, insomnia, fever, rash and weakness.

Inform your doctor if the side effects become severe and bothersome. Report to doctor immediately when your child complains of numbness or tingling of fingers, toes or feet.

Special instructions:

Some medication may reduce its efficacy, or increase its toxicity. Do not give your child any other medications or herbal products without first consulting your doctor.

Storage:

Capsules and oral solution should be refrigerated (<25°C). It should be protected from moisture and kept away from direct light.