

# Medications to Reduce the Risk of HIV Infection

## Information about early drug treatment after contact with blood or body fluids

You have been exposed to blood or other body fluids that might be infected with HIV. Early drug treatment may prevent HIV infection. This treatment is called Post-exposure Prophylaxis (PEP).

This brochure provides information about PEP medications (medicines). To learn more about the risks of infection and how to manage an exposure to blood or other body fluids, contact your health care provider.

### What are PEP medicines?

Depending on your age and the type of exposure, you will receive one, two or three different medicines:

- **BASIC PEP** – For lower-risk exposures

	Name	Another Name
and	Zidovudine	AZT, Retrovir®
	Lamivudine	3TC®
or	Combivir®	Zidovudine + Lamivudine in one tablet (for adolescents and adults)

- **EXPANDED PEP** – For higher-risk exposures; used with BASIC PEP (must take both)

	Name	Another Name
or	Kaletra®	Lopinavir + Ritonavir in one tablet (for adolescents and adults)
	Nelfinavir	Viracept® (for young children)

### How do I take these medicines?

- These medicines are taken orally (by mouth).
- Start the medicines immediately (within three days, but best if started two to four hours after the exposure).
- Finish the medicines unless your health care provider tells you to stop taking them.

Zidovudine Lamivudine Combivir®	<p>May be taken with food or on an empty stomach.</p> <p>If you are unable to swallow the tablet or capsule:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ask your health care provider to prescribe the medicine as liquid</li> <li>• empty the contents of the zidovudine capsule (wear gloves) into apple sauce, water or juice</li> <li>• crush the lamivudine or Combivir® tablet (avoid inhaling powder) and mix with applesauce, water or juice</li> </ul>
Kaletra®	<p>Swallow the tablet whole, do <b>not</b> chew or crush the tablet.</p> <p>Take with food or on an empty stomach.</p> <p>Liquid product is available, but has a strong, unpleasant taste.</p>
Nelfinavir	<p>Take with food or on an empty stomach.</p> <p>Tablet may be crushed and mixed with non-acidic foods or beverages (no applesauce, apple juice, orange juice – acidic foods create a bitter taste).</p>

### What if I miss or vomit (throw up) a dose?

- Taking all the medicine as prescribed is important to prevent HIV infection.
- If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember. Do not take two doses within six hours.
- If you do not remember until time for the next dose, just take this dose. Never double the dose.
- If you miss more than three doses in a row or miss doses often, contact your health care provider.
- If you vomit (throw up) a dose of medicine within **30 minutes** of taking it, repeat the dose. If this happens more than twice, contact your health care provider.

### What are possible side effects?

The following side effects are common within the first week of taking the medicine. They go away as the medicine is continued. These side effects are not a reason to stop taking the medicine:

- nausea, vomiting (throwing up)
- fatigue (tiredness)
- headache \*
- upset stomach
- loose stools or diarrhea (mild to moderate) \*\*
- general aches and pains, muscle pain \*

\* Acetaminophen (ex: Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (ex: Advil®, Motrin®) may be used safely up to four times a day, as needed.

\*\* Anti-diarrheal medicine (ex: loperamide, Imodium®) may be used if diarrhea is bothersome, but the loose stools usually resolve over the first week of therapy. If symptoms continue, contact your health care provider or pharmacist.

These side effects are less common. Call your health care provider if you develop any of these signs or symptoms:

- jaundice (yellow eyes or skin)
- increased bruising
- abdominal (stomach) cramps that do not go away
- numbness or tingling of fingers, toes or limbs

### What else should I do?

- Do **not** take any other medicine, including herbal products, without checking with your health care provider or pharmacist. Most antibiotics, acetaminophen (ex: Tylenol®) and ibuprofen (ex: Advil®, Motrin®) are safe to take with PEP drugs.
- Tell your health care provider **before you start the medicine** if you:
  - are pregnant
  - have kidney or liver disease
  - have low blood counts
- Store the medicines in the original bottle with the lid sealed tightly. Do not store close to heat. The medicine can be stored at room temperature.

### Where do I get the medicines?

- You will get a five-day, BASIC or EXPANDED “starter kit” at no charge. This will help you to start the medicines quickly.
- When the test results are ready, your health care provider will tell you to stop or to continue up to 28 days of medicine. Do **not** stop the medicine unless directed by your health care provider.
- Should you require more than the five-day starter kit, your health care provider will give you a prescription to continue up to 28 days of treatment. Take this prescription to your local pharmacy.

### How do I get rid of unused medicine?

If your health care provider tells you to stop taking the medicine, return the unused portion to your pharmacy. Ask the pharmacist to destroy the medicine. Do **not** keep the medicine for future use or give it to anyone else.

**For more information about these medicines, ask your health care provider or pharmacist.**