# ATAZANAVIR

*a-tah-za-nah-veer*

## What does it do?

*Atazanavir* is used with other medicines to control HIV.

## Before you start

- Tell your doctor if you have heart problems, haemophilia, or if you have ever had hepatitis B or C.
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding.

## How should you take it?

Take *atazanavir* regularly as directed with food and a glass of water. You must take *atazanavir* and *ritonavir* together at the same time.
It is very important to take *atazanavir* regularly. If you often forget to take it, it may not work as well.

Do not stop taking *atazanavir* without talking to your doctor first.

## What if you forget a dose?

If it is nearly time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and take your next dose at the usual time. Otherwise, take the missed dose as soon as you remember. Do not take two doses at the same time.

## Can you take other medicines?

*Atazanavir* with *ritonavir* can react with many medicines, sometimes with severe results. Remember to tell your pharmacist or doctor you are taking *atazanavir* and *ritonavir* before starting any other medicines or treatments, including over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, herbal products or recreational drugs.

## What side effects might you notice?

| Side Effects | Recommended action |
|---|---|
| Severe stomach pain, nausea<br>Chest pain, fainting | Tell your doctor immediately |
| Lower back pain, pink/red/brown pee (may be a kidney stone) | Tell your doctor |
| Headache<br>Muscle aches and pains<br>Stomach upset | Tell your doctor if troublesome |
| Skin rash | This can occur in the first few weeks. Rarely, this may be serious. Ring your clinic to check |

If you notice any other effects, discuss them with your doctor or pharmacist.

## Other information:

- You will need regular blood tests while taking *atazanavir* to check your viral load.
- *Atazanavir* can cause kidney stones if you do not drink enough fluid. Discuss with your health professional.
- As your HIV comes under control, your immune system begins to recover. It may start fighting infections better than before which may make you unwell for a while. Your doctor may call this Immune Reconstitution Inflammatory Syndrome (IRIS).
- Weight gain may occur with treatment for HIV. Discuss this with your health professional.