



Information Exchange

St Stephen's Centre
369 Fulham Road
London SW10 9NH

Tel: 020 8746 5929

Fax: 020 8746 5595

infoex@chelwest.nhs.uk

www.ststephensvolunteers.org.uk

Didanosine (Videx®)

Please read this factsheet together with the patient information leaflet carefully before taking your medicine. If you have any questions or are unsure about anything, ask your doctor or pharmacist. The information in this leaflet may differ slightly from the Manufacturer's information. This is because this medicine may be prescribed differently to its product license; however it is in accordance with local prescribing guidelines.

Didanosine (Videx), also known as **ddl** is a **nucleoside analogue or nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor (NRTIs)**. NRTIs are used for the treatment of HIV infection, in combination with other anti-HIV drugs. Please speak to your clinic doctor or pharmacist if you would like more information about how these drugs work.

Before taking Didanosine

Tell your doctor about:

- All other drugs that you are taking, including any that you buy over the counter in a community pharmacy or any herbal remedies
- Any previous allergy to any other medicines.
- If you have ever had any liver or kidney disease.
- If you have ever had pancreatitis
- If you are pregnant or thinking about becoming pregnant

Taking your

Didanosine is available as

- an opaque white capsule embossed in tan with "6671" on one half, and "BMS 125 mg" on the other half containing 125mg of Didanosine.
- an opaque white capsule embossed in green with "6672" on one half, and "BMS 200 mg" on the other half containing 200mg of Didanosine.
- an opaque white capsule embossed in blue with "6673" on one half, and "BMS 250 mg" on the other half containing 250mg of Didanosine.
- an opaque white capsule embossed in red with "6674" on one half, and "BMS 400 mg" on the other half containing 400mg of Didanosine.

The dose of you are prescribed will be based on your weight, your kidney function and whether you are also taking Tenofovir.

- Capsules should be taken on an empty stomach at least two hours before or two hours after food i.e. no food should be consumed in the 2 hours preceding the dose or for the 2 hours following the dose. **However**, if you are prescribed with Tenofovir then you should take both medications together with food.
- Swallow the capsule whole. Do not crush, break, dissolve or chew it.
- Try to take as close as possible to 24 hours apart, and at the same time each day.
- Didanosine, like all antiretrovirals, works best if there is a constant amount in your bloodstream. It is therefore very important to take the capsules regularly. If you forget to take a dose, take it as soon as you remember if it is within 12 hours of the time you usually take it. If it is later than 12 hours after the time you usually take your dose, the missed dose should not be taken and you should resume your usual dosing schedule.

Do not run out of Didanosine. If you are going on holiday and need additional supplies, tell your doctor. When receiving a supply from pharmacy, ensure that you have an adequate supply to last until your next appointment.

Side effects

Didanosine, like all other medicines, has some side effects. The most common ones (incidence of more than 1 in 100 patients) are:

- Peripheral neuropathy - the symptoms of which are tingling, burning, pain or numbness in the hands and/or feet.
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Nausea and vomiting
- Abdominal pain
- Diarrhoea
- Rash

A condition called pancreatitis has occurred rarely in patients who are taking Didanosine. Pancreatitis is a dangerous inflammation of the pancreas.

Tell your doctor *straight away* if you develop stomach pain, nausea or vomiting.

This condition occurs more often in patients who have had it previously, and in patients who are also taking stavudine (d4T), with or without hydroxyurea

During working hours contact your doctor or the Kobler Pharmacy on 020 8746 5604

Out of hours contact Thomas Macaulay ward, Chelsea and Westminster Hospital on 020 8746 8540

Lactic acidosis has been reported with the use of nucleoside analogues. Your doctor will be monitoring your lactate levels, but if you experience the following symptoms, inform your doctor: nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, loss of appetite, weight loss, rapid, deep breathing or muscle weakness.

If you experience any of the side effects above or any new symptoms after you start Didanosine, tell your doctor who will tell you what to do. If you decide you want to stop taking Didanosine, it is important that you tell your doctor so that they can discuss other treatment options with you.

Admission to hospital

If you are admitted to hospital please bring all your medicines with you. This is especially important for HIV drugs, as they have to be taken regularly. Thomas Macaulay Ward operates a self medication programme. Some people are able to self administer their own medicines to enable them to stick to the routine they have been used to at home.

Storing Didanosine EC capsules

Didanosine EC capsules should be stored at room temperature.

Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions about your medicines you can phone the Pharmacy Medicines Help Line on: **020 8746 8366** between 10am and 5pm, Monday to Friday.

Please have your medicines and prescriptions to hand when you phone if possible.

This information was prepared by the HIV/GUM pharmacy department at the Chelsea and Westminster Hospital.

If you have any queries regarding this information, please call the Kobler Pharmacy on 020 8746 5604.

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