



Information Exchange

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T20 (Enfuvirtide)

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.

T20, also known as enfuvirtide and by the brand name Fuzeon[®], belongs to a class of drugs to treat HIV infection called **Fusion inhibitors**. Fusion Inhibitors 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 T20

Tell your doctor about

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

Taking your T20

- T20 is only available as an injection.
- The usual dose is 90mg (1ml) twice a day. It must be injected subcutaneously (i.e. just below the skin) in the upper arms, upper thighs or abdomen. Each injection should be given at a different site to the previous one and never where there is an injection site reaction from an earlier dose or where the skin is bruised.
- T20 works best if there is a constant amount in your bloodstream. It is therefore very important to administer the injection regularly. If you forget a dose, inject it as soon as you remember and inject the next dose on time. However, do not administer a double dose to make up for a missed dose.
- Try to administer the doses as close as possible to twelve hours apart at the same time each day. It is essential that you do not miss your doses.
- Please refer to the directions given with the T20 on how to prepare the injection.
- Ensure that used syringes are disposed of safely in a sharps container.

Do not run out of T20. If you are going on holiday and need extra supplies - tell your doctor. When receiving a supply from pharmacy, ensure that you have an adequate supply to last until your next appointment

Other drugs and T20

T20 does not seem to interfere with other drugs in tests done so far. However, some drugs may interfere with other antiretrovirals that you may be on as part of your combination, so please inform your doctor or pharmacist of any other medication, herbal remedies or recreational drugs that you are taking.

Side effects

T20, like all other medicines, has some side effects. Most people will get injection site reactions which include itching, swelling, redness, pain, hardened skin or bumps. These can appear within the first week of treatment and generally do not get worse with continued treatment. They usually do not last for more than seven days.

Other common side effects are diarrhoea, nausea, headache and insomnia.

Pneumonia seems to be more common in patients treated with T20. If you develop a cough with a high temperature or shortness of breath, please inform your doctor.

Allergy to T20 seems to be rare, but please inform your doctor straight away if you get a rash, high temperature, vomiting, or experience shaking or sweating.

If you encounter any of the side effects above or any new symptoms after you start T20, tell your doctor who will tell you what to do. If you decide to stop taking T20, 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 anti-HIV drugs, as they have to be taken regularly. Thomas Macaulay Ward now operates a self medication programme. Some patients are able to self administer their own medicines to enable them to continue with the routine they have been used to at home.

Storing T20

T20 should be stored at room temperature and should not be exposed to sunlight. Once the solution is prepared, it should be used immediately, or within 24 hours, but must be stored in a refrigerator.

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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