

HIVInfo.us presents
An HIV Information Site & HIV Educational Resource Site

raltegravir (Isentress)	
General Information	Raltegravir (Isentress) is almost always used as one component of a multidrug combination to suppress the human immunodeficiency (HIV) viral load.
Specifics	<p>Raltegravir is one of the newest and most effective antiviral medications used to treat HIV.</p> <p>Raltegravir is different from all other FDA-approved HIV medications.</p> <p>Raltegravir works by inhibiting HIV genetic information from being introduced into human genetic information. Raltegravir is classified as an integrase inhibitor.</p>
Dosing including preparation and administration	Raltegravir is taken as a single 400 mg tablet twice a day, with or without food.
Adherence (this refers to your willingness, ability, and actual performance in taking your medications) For further information and tips on adherence, go to the Adherence section of this site.	<p>The "all or none" rule applies to all antiviral medications such as raltegravir: you should commit yourself to taking every dose, every day OR take none at all. Missing doses leads to a worsening of HIV infections (resistance to medications) and makes finding a good antiviral medication harder to do.</p> <p>As with any antiviral drug or antibiotic, try not to ever miss a dose. If you miss a dose and notice that you have done so within a few hours of its scheduled time, you may take the dose as usual and take the next dose at its regular time.</p> <p>You should never change the dose of raltegravir without speaking to your healthcare provider first.</p> <p>If you miss more than one dose, look at the reasons why you missed them and come up with a plan to avoid it in the future. For example, if you fell asleep too early, take the medicine earlier in the evening, with your later meal, set an alarm, or have someone appointed to wake you up for your medicine.</p> <p>It is strongly recommended that you consider using weekly pill boxes and arrange all of your doses a week in advance. Buy a small pill box so that you can carry a dose or two of your medicines with you in case you are away from home. Obviously in the case of raltegravir, a lot of planning has to be done as it may be difficult to carry extra raltegravir, syringes, and other supplies with you.</p>
Possible Side Effects The package insert for most drugs including raltegravir is often overwhelming and scary with perhaps an overemphasis	<p>Most people take raltegravir without any side effects.</p> <p>Usually you will have blood tests done in the first month to look for the beneficial effects of raltegravir and any side effects.</p>

on side effects. We have summarized the important and more common problems here.

Many minor side effects will either stay constant or get better with time. It is mainly the side effects that are severe or get worse that may cause significant health risks for you.

Interactions
This refers to the way that raltegravir affects other medications

Raltegravir should not be taken with rifampin which is drug used to treat tuberculosis and other infections. There are no other significant interactions known.

However, make sure your healthcare providers knows all the medications you are taking including any herbal and over the counter medications.

Report to you healthcare provider or go to an Emergency Room if you have severe side effects, increasing side effects, shortness of breath, uncontrollable diarrhea, back pain, groin pain, fever, weakness, jaundice (eyes and skin turn yellow,) muscle pain, nausea and vomiting so that you cannot hold down your food and liquids.

You can download this handout in PDF format by clicking [HERE](#).

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