

# How to take your



# ZIAGEN

*(Also called Abacavir)*

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Nucleoside Analog Reverse Transcriptase Inhibitor (NRTI)

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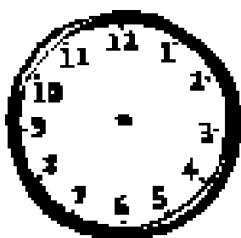
## What is Ziagen? (z-EYE-uh-jen)

Ziagen is a strong medicine that can reduce the amount of HIV in your body. Ziagen fights HIV best when you take it together with one or more other anti-HIV medicines.

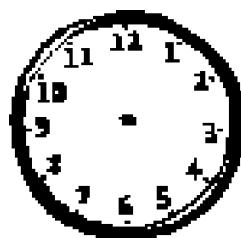
## How many pills do I take? And when do I take them?

Each day, take \_\_\_\_\_ pills every \_\_\_\_\_ hours.

Take your pills at these times EVERY DAY:



*Morning*

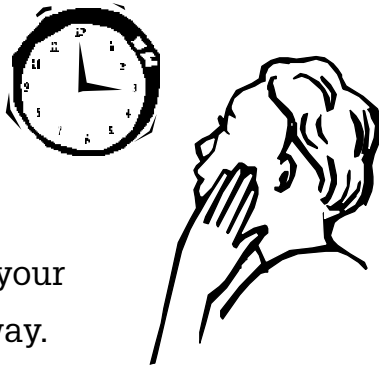


*Evening*

**Important:** To be sure there is always enough Ziagen in your body to fight HIV, take your pills as close to these times as possible. And be sure to take the right number of pills each time.

## What if I forget to take my pills on time?

- When you notice that you missed a dose, take your pills right away.



### Then, for your NEXT DOSE:

- If your next planned pill-taking time is \_\_\_\_ or more hours away, take your next dose at the planned time.
- If your next planned pill-taking time is less than \_\_\_\_ hours away, DO NOT take your next dose at the planned time. Instead, wait \_\_\_\_ hours and then take your next dose.

**If you forget more than one dose in a week, call your doctor or nurse to talk about what to do.**

## What should I do if I have side effects?

Some people who take Ziagen have side effects (unwanted effects of the medicine). This is most likely to happen in the first six weeks of starting the medicine.

**About 1 in 20 patients (5%) who take Ziagen will have a serious allergic reaction (hypersensitivity reaction) that may cause death if the drug is not stopped right away.**

### You may be having this reaction if:

- (1) you get a skin rash, or
- (2) you get 1 or more symptoms from at least 2 of the following groups:
  - Fever
  - Feeling sick to your stomach, vomiting, diarrhea, stomach pain
  - Feeling very weak or tired, generally feeling sick
  - Sore throat, trouble breathing, cough

## If you have these side effects:

If you think you may be having this reaction, call your doctor right away.

If you stop treatment with Ziagen because of this serious reaction, **NEVER take Ziagen again**. If you take Ziagen again after you have had this serious reaction, **you could die within hours**.

If you must stop treatment with Ziagen for a different reason (not the hypersensitivity reaction), do not begin taking it again without talking to your doctor.



## What are the medicines I should NOT use now that I'm taking Ziagen?

Some medicines don't mix well with Ziagen. Taking Ziagen when you are using these medicines could make



you very sick or cause the medicines not to work.

Your doctor knows which medicines are safe to take with Ziagen and which are not. **Be sure you have told your doctor about ALL the medicines you are taking.** This includes:

- medicines prescribed to you by a doctor
- medicines you can buy without a prescription
- herbal medicines
- street drugs

## Call your doctor or nurse if:



- you have questions about how to take Ziagen
- you are being bothered by side effects
- you feel like stopping or taking less Ziagen
- you are having trouble taking Ziagen on time
- you want to start taking ANY medicine you are not now taking.

## **DON'T FORGET:** You can still spread the virus.

The anti-HIV medicines you are taking can help you stay healthier longer. But they do not cure HIV. To avoid passing HIV to others:  
Practice safe sex. Don't share needles or syringes.

*Developed by John Snow, Inc. and JSI Clinical Research. Boston, MA, 2002.*

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