

[Home](#)

2. Ritonavir

Ritonavir

Generic name: ritonavir [*rit-OH-na-vir*]**Brand names:** [Norvir](#), Norvir Soft Gelatin**Dosage forms:** oral powder for reconstitution (100 mg), oral tablet (100 mg)**Drug classes:** [Antiviral boosters](#), [Protease inhibitors](#)[Medically reviewed](#) by Drugs.com on Apr 4, 2025. Written by [Cerner Multum](#).[Uses](#) [Side effects](#) [Warnings](#) [Before taking](#) [Dosage](#) [Interactions](#)

What is ritonavir?

Ritonavir is an antiviral medicine that prevents human [immunodeficiency](#) virus (HIV) from multiplying in your body.

Ritonavir is used together with other antiviral medicines to treat HIV, the virus that can cause [acquired immunodeficiency syndrome](#) (AIDS). **Ritonavir is not a cure for HIV or AIDS.**

Ritonavir may also be used for purposes not listed in this medication guide.

Ritonavir side effects

Get emergency medical help if you have **signs of an allergic reaction** (hives, skin sores, difficult breathing, fast or pounding heartbeats, sweating, mouth sores, swelling in your face or throat) **or a severe skin reaction** (fever, sore throat, burning eyes, skin pain, red or purple skin rash with blistering and peeling).

Ritonavir may cause serious side effects. Call your doctor at once if you have:

- irregular heartbeats, or a light-headed feeling (like you might pass out);
- easy bruising, unusual bleeding (nose, mouth, vagina, or rectum), purple or red pinpoint spots under your skin;
- **signs of a kidney stone**--pain in your side or lower back, blood in your urine, painful or difficult urination;
- **high blood sugar**--increased thirst, increased urination, hunger, dry mouth, fruity breath odor; or
- **signs of liver or pancreas problems**--loss of appetite, upper stomach pain (that may spread to your back), nausea, vomiting, dark urine, jaundice (yellowing of the skin or eyes).

Ritonavir affects your immune system, which may cause certain side effects (even weeks or months after you've taken ritonavir). Tell your doctor if you have:

- **signs of a new infection**--fever, night sweats, swollen glands, cold sores, cough, wheezing, diarrhea, [weight loss](#);
- trouble speaking or swallowing, problems with balance or eye movement, weakness or prickly feeling; or

- swelling in your neck or throat (enlarged thyroid), menstrual changes, impotence.

Common side effects of ritonavir may include:

- nausea, vomiting, stomach pain, diarrhea;
- numbness or tingling in your hands or feet or around your mouth;
- feeling weak or tired;
- rash; or
- changes in the shape or location of body fat (especially in your arms, legs, face, neck, breasts, and waist).

This is not a complete list of side effects and others may occur. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

 [Ritonavir side effects](#) (more detail)

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Warnings

Tell your doctor about all your other medicines. **Some drugs should not be used with ritonavir.**

Before taking this medicine

Some drugs should not be used with ritonavir. Your treatment plan may change if you also use:

- alfuzosin, [apalutamide](#), cisapride, colchicine, [St. John's wort](#), [voriconazole](#);
- sildenafil (Revatio) when used to treat pulmonary arterial hypertension (PAH);
- **antipsychotic medicine**--lurasidone, pimozide;
- **cholesterol-lowering medicine**--lovastatin, [simvastatin](#), lomitapide;
- **ergot medicine**--[dihydroergotamine](#), ergotamine, [methylergonovine](#);
- **heart medicine**--amiodarone, [dronedarone](#), flecainide, [propafenone](#), quinidine, ranolazine; or
- **a sedative**--oral midazolam or triazolam.

Tell your doctor if you have ever had:

- [liver disease](#) (especially [hepatitis B](#) or C);
- heart problems;
- diabetes; or
- a [bleeding disorder](#) such as hemophilia.

Ritonavir **liquid** contains alcohol and propylene glycol, and should not be used by pregnant women or premature babies.

To prevent HIV in a newborn baby, use all medications to control your infection during pregnancy. Your name may be listed on an antiviral pregnancy registry.

Ritonavir can make [birth control pills](#) or skin patches less effective. Ask your doctor about other [birth control](#) options such as an injection, implant, [vaginal ring](#), condom, diaphragm, cervical cap, or contraceptive sponge.

Women with HIV should not breastfeed. The virus can pass to your baby in your breast milk.

How should I take ritonavir?

Ritonavir should not be used without other antiviral medication. Follow all directions on your prescription label and read all medication guides or instruction sheets. Your doctor may occasionally change your dose. Use the medicine exactly as directed.

Take with meals.

Read and follow all Instructions for Use. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you need help.

Swallow the **tablet** whole and do not crush, chew, or break it.

Shake the **oral solution** (liquid). Measure a dose with the supplied syringe or a dose-measuring device (not a kitchen spoon).

Follow your doctor's dosing instructions very carefully when giving ritonavir to an infant. Doses are based on body surface area (height and weight) in children. The dose may change if the child grows or gains weight.

Use all HIV medications as directed. **Do not change your dose or stop using a medicine without your doctor's advice.** Remain under the care of a doctor.

You will need frequent medical tests.

If you've had hepatitis B, it may come back or get worse. You may need liver function tests while using ritonavir and for several months after you stop.

Store the **tablets, liquid, or powder** at room temperature away from heat or moisture. Do not refrigerate. Keep tightly closed when not in use.

Store the **capsules** in the refrigerator or at room temperature away from moisture, heat, and light. Or store at room temperature and use the capsules within 30 days.

 [Detailed Ritonavir dosage information](#)

What happens if I miss a dose?

Take the medicine as soon as you can, but skip the missed dose if it is almost time for your next dose. **Do not** take two doses at one time.

Get your prescription refilled before you run out of medicine completely.

What happens if I overdose?

Seek emergency medical attention or call the Poison Help line at 1-800-222-1222. **An overdose of ritonavir oral liquid could be fatal to a child.**

What should I avoid while taking ritonavir?

Drinking alcohol or taking disulfiram (Antabuse) while taking ritonavir **capsules** or **liquid** may cause unpleasant side effects.

Using ritonavir will not prevent your disease from spreading. Ask your doctor how to prevent HIV transmission during sex. Sharing drug or medicine needles is never safe.

What other drugs will affect ritonavir?

Sometimes it is not safe to use certain medicines at the same time. Some drugs can affect your blood levels of other drugs you use, which may increase side effects or make the medicines less effective.

Many drugs can affect ritonavir, and some drugs should not be used at the same time. Tell your doctor about all other medicines you use. This includes prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and [herbal products](#). **Not all possible interactions are listed here.**

 [Ritonavir drug interactions](#) (more detail)

Does ritonavir interact with my other drugs?

Enter medications to view a detailed interaction report using our [Drug Interaction Checker](#).

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Further information

Remember, keep this and all other medicines out of the reach of children, never share your medicines with others, and use this medication only for the indication prescribed.

Always consult your healthcare provider to ensure the information displayed on this page applies to your personal circumstances.

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Availability		
Rx	Prescription only	
Pregnancy & Lactation		
	Risk data available	
CSA Schedule*		
N/A	Not a controlled drug	▼
Approval History		
	Drug history at FDA	▼

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