



Acyclovir

Anti-viral medicine

Pronounced: a-sigh-klo-veer (brand name: Zovirax)

What is acyclovir?

Acyclovir is used to prevent or treat infections that are caused by certain viruses. These include herpes simplex, herpes zoster, varicella zoster and Epstein-Barr. Read more about these viruses in Chapter 4, “Infections.”

Your Dose

Your dose depends on what type of viral infection we are trying to either treat or prevent. You will be told your dose when the medicine is prescribed for you. Acyclovir comes in 200 mg capsules and tablets of 400 mg and 800 mg. Doses usually range anywhere from 200 to 800 mg.

How do I take it?

- The pills are taken between 2 and 5 times a day.
- You can take acyclovir with or without food. But, if you find it upsets your stomach, you may want to take it with meals.
- Take each dose with a full glass of water.

How is it stored?

Store acyclovir at room temperature, away from direct sunlight.

What are the side effects?

Acyclovir has many benefits, but it may also cause some side effects. Please let the transplant team know if you have any of these side effects:

- **Stomach problems:** You may have diarrhea, nausea, or vomiting. Taking acyclovir with food may help. Tell your transplant team if you have diarrhea or are vomiting for 24 hours or more and you cannot keep your medicines down.
- **Dizziness:** Tell your transplant team if you feel dizzy or lightheaded. It may be from the acyclovir, but other things can also cause these symptoms.
- **Joint pain:** If acyclovir causes joint pain, it is most likely to be in the arm and leg joints. Tell your transplant team if you have joint pain.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns.

Cardiology Clinic:
Weekdays 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.,
call 206-598-4300.

After hours and on weekends and holidays, call 206-744-2500. Say you are a heart transplant patient. A nurse will assess your problem and help you.