Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Rifampin, Isoniazid, and Pyrazinamide

This information from Lexicomp® explains what you need to know about this medication, including what it’s used for, how to take it, its side effects, and when to call your healthcare provider.

Brand Names: US

Rifater [DSC]

Warning

- This drug may cause severe and sometimes deadly liver problems like hepatitis. Call your doctor right away if you have signs of liver problems like dark urine, tiredness, decreased appetite, upset stomach or stomach pain, light-colored stools, throwing up, or yellow skin or eyes.
- The risk of liver problems is higher the older you are. The risk may also be raised in people who have had liver problems before, who drink alcohol daily, or who take other drugs that may raise the chance of liver problems. There may be other things that may also raise the risk of liver problems. If you have questions, talk with the doctor.
- Liver problems usually happen within the first 3 months of starting this drug. However, they can happen at any time while taking it. Most of the time, liver function has gone back to normal but sometimes it has not. Blood work will be done before starting this drug and during treatment. If you have questions, talk with the doctor.
- If you have liver disease, talk with your doctor. This drug may not be right for you.

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat TB (tuberculosis).

What do I need to tell my doctor BEFORE I take this drug?

- If you are allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell your doctor about the allergy and what signs you had.

- If you have any of these health problems: Gout or liver problems.
- If you have had very bad side effects while taking isoniazid in the past, like liver problems, drug fever, chills, or arthritis.
- If you had liver problems while taking some other drug in the past.
- If you take any drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) that must not be taken with this drug, like certain drugs that are used for HIV, infections, or depression. There are many drugs that must not be taken with this drug. Your doctor or pharmacist can tell you if you are taking a drug that must not be taken with this drug.

This is not a list of all drugs or health problems that interact with this drug.

Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all of your drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe for you to take this drug with all of your drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug without checking with your doctor.

What are some things I need to know or do while I take this drug?

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- Avoid drinking alcohol while taking this drug.
- If you have high blood sugar (diabetes), you will need to watch your blood sugar closely. Tell your doctor if you get signs of high blood sugar like confusion, feeling sleepy, unusual thirst or hunger, passing urine more often, flushing, fast breathing, or breath that smells like fruit.
- Watch for gout attacks.
- Some foods and drinks, like cheese and red wine, may cause sudden, severe high blood pressure when you are taking this drug. This effect can be deadly. Talk with your doctor about your risk for this effect. Get a list of foods and drinks to avoid. Avoid these foods and drinks for as long

as your doctor has told you after this drug is stopped.

- Certain lung problems have happened with this drug. These lung problems could be deadly. If you have questions, talk with the doctor.
- Diarrhea is common with antibiotics. Rarely, a severe form called C diff–associated diarrhea (CDAD) may happen. Sometimes, this has led to a deadly bowel problem. CDAD may happen during or a few months after taking antibiotics. Call your doctor right away if you have stomach pain, cramps, or very loose, watery, or bloody stools. Check with your doctor before treating diarrhea.
- Severe skin reactions may happen with this drug. These include Stevens-Johnson syndrome (SJS), toxic epidermal necrolysis (TEN), and other serious reactions. Sometimes, body organs may also be affected. These reactions can be deadly. Get medical help right away if you have signs like red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin; red or irritated eyes; sores in your mouth, throat, nose, eyes, genitals, or any areas of skin; fever; chills; body aches; shortness of breath; or swollen glands.
- Call your doctor right away if you have signs of kidney problems like not able to pass urine; change in how much urine is passed; bloody, brown, or foamy urine; shortness of breath or cough; or puffy or swollen face, feet, or hands.
- Very bad and sometimes deadly blood problems like thrombotic thrombocytopenic purpura/hemolytic uremic syndrome (TTP/HUS) have happened with this drug in some people. Call your doctor right away if you feel very tired or weak or have any bruising or bleeding; dark urine or yellow skin or eyes; pale skin; change in the amount of urine passed; change in eyesight; change in strength on 1 side is greater than the other, trouble speaking or thinking, or change in balance; or fever.
- If you are 65 or older, use this drug with care. You could have more side effects.
- Birth control pills and other hormone-based birth control may not work as well to prevent pregnancy. Use some other kind of birth control also like a condom when taking this drug.

- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, plan on getting pregnant, or are breast-feeding. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks to you and the baby.

What are some side effects that I need to call my doctor about right away?

WARNING/CAUTION: Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing, swallowing, or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.
- Signs of lupus like a rash on the cheeks or other body parts, sunburn easy, muscle or joint pain, chest pain or shortness of breath, or swelling in the arms or legs.
- Signs of a pancreas problem (pancreatitis) like very bad stomach pain, very bad back pain, or very bad upset stomach or throwing up.
- Signs of too much acid in the blood (acidosis) like confusion; fast breathing; fast heartbeat; a heartbeat that does not feel normal; very bad stomach pain, upset stomach, or throwing up; feeling very sleepy; shortness of breath; or feeling very tired or weak.
- Chest pain or pressure.
- Coughing up blood.
- Fever, chills, or sore throat; any unexplained bruising or bleeding; or feeling very tired or weak.
- Flu-like signs.
- A heartbeat that does not feel normal.
- Joint pain or swelling.
- Period (menstrual) changes.

- Ringing in ears.
- Muscle pain or weakness.
- Sweating a lot.
- Swelling in the arms or legs.
- Purple spots or redness of the skin.
- Dizziness or passing out.
- A burning, numbness, or tingling feeling that is not normal.
- Seizures.
- Memory problems or loss.
- Change in eyesight, eye pain, or severe eye irritation.
- Change in balance.
- Feeling confused, not able to focus, or change in behavior.
- Change in tooth color. These changes may be long-lasting.
- Call your doctor right away if you have new or worse symptoms like cough, fever, feeling tired or weak, shortness of breath, headache, pain, night sweats, swollen gland, decreased appetite, or weight loss.

What are some other side effects of this drug?

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother you or do not go away:

- Change in color of body fluids to orange or red.
- This drug may stain contact lenses.
- Feeling sleepy.
- Gas.
- Diarrhea, upset stomach, or throwing up.
- Stomach pain or cramps.

- Heartburn.
- Trouble sleeping.
- Anxiety.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your doctor. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-332-1088. You may also report side effects at https://www.fda.gov/medwatch.

How is this drug best taken?

Use this drug as ordered by your doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

- Take on an empty stomach. Take 1 hour before or 2 hours after meals.
- Take with a full glass of water.
- Keep taking this drug as you have been told by your doctor or other health care provider, even if you feel well.
- If you are taking an antacid, take this drug at least 1 hour before taking the antacid.
- Have your blood work checked and eye exams as you have been told by your doctor.
- This drug may affect certain lab tests. Tell all of your health care providers and lab workers that you take this drug.
- Some people may need to take vitamin B6 (pyridoxine) along with this drug. This may include teenagers or people who do not have proper nutrition, drink a lot of alcohol, or have diabetes. If you have questions, talk with your doctor.
- Do not use longer than you have been told. A second infection may happen.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

- Take a missed dose as soon as you think about it.
- If it is close to the time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your normal time.
- Do not take 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.

How do I store and/or throw out this drug?

- Store at room temperature in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.
- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Throw away unused or expired drugs. Do not flush down a toilet or pour down a drain unless you are told to do so. Check with your pharmacist if you have questions about the best way to throw out drugs. There may be drug take-back programs in your area.

General drug facts

- If your symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your doctor.
- Do not share your drugs with others and do not take anyone else’s drugs.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. Check with your pharmacist. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

Consumer Information Use and Disclaimer

This generalized information is a limited summary of diagnosis, treatment, and/or medication information. It is not meant to be comprehensive and should be used as a tool to help the user understand and/or assess potential diagnostic and treatment options. It does NOT include all information about conditions, treatments, medications, side effects, or risks that may apply to a specific patient. It is not intended to be medical advice or a substitute for the medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment of a health care provider based on the health care provider's examination and assessment of a patient's specific and unique circumstances. Patients must speak with a health care provider for complete information about their health, medical questions, and treatment options, including any risks or benefits regarding use of medications. This information does not endorse any treatments or medications as safe, effective, or approved for treating a specific patient. UpToDate, Inc. and its affiliates disclaim any warranty or liability relating to this information or the use thereof. The use of this information is governed by the Terms of Use, available at https://www.wolterskluwer.com/en/know/clinical-effectiveness-terms.

Last Reviewed Date

2023-12-27

Copyright

© 2024 UpToDate, Inc. and its affiliates and/or licensors. All rights reserved.

If you have any questions, contact a member of your care team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5 p.m., during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

Rifampin, Isoniazid, and Pyrazinamide - Last updated on December 12, 2022
All rights owned and reserved by Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center