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PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

# Tenofovir Alafenamide

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

Vemlidy

## Brand Names: Canada

Vemlidy

## Warning

- Hepatitis B has gotten worse when this drug was stopped in some people with hepatitis B. Close follow-up for a few months is needed when therapy is stopped in people who have hepatitis B. Do not stop taking this drug without calling your doctor. Talk with your doctor.

## What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat hepatitis B infection.

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

- If you have an allergy to tenofovir or any other part of this drug.
- If you are allergic to any drugs like this one, any other drugs, foods, or other substances. Tell your doctor about the allergy and what signs you had, like rash; hives; itching; shortness of breath; wheezing; cough; swelling of face, lips, tongue, or throat; or any other signs.
- If you have any of these health problems: HIV, kidney problems, or liver problems other than hepatitis B.

- If you are taking any of these drugs: Oxcarbazepine, phenobarbital, phenytoin, rifabutin, rifampin, rifapentine, or St. John's wort.
- If you are taking another drug that has the same drug in it.
- If you are taking any drugs that can raise the chance of kidney problems. There are many drugs that can do this. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure.

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.
- You will need to have an HIV test as you were told by your doctor. Talk with your doctor.
- Kidney problems like kidney failure have happened with this drug. Tell your doctor if you have ever had kidney problems.
- Have blood work checked as you have been told by the doctor. Talk with the doctor.
- Have your urine checked as you have been told by your doctor.
- This drug does not stop the spread of diseases like HIV or hepatitis that are passed through blood or having sex. Do not have any kind of sex without using a latex or polyurethane condom. Do not share needles or other things like toothbrushes or razors. Talk with your doctor.
- This drug may rarely cause swollen liver and an acid health problem in the blood. This may be deadly in some cases. The chance may be higher in women, in overweight people, and in people who have taken drugs like this one for a long time. Talk with your doctor.

- 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 kidney problems like unable to pass urine, change in how much urine is passed, blood in the urine, or a big weight gain.
- Signs of liver problems like dark urine, feeling tired, not hungry, upset stomach or stomach pain, light-colored stools, throwing up, or yellow skin or eyes.
- Signs of too much lactic acid in the blood (lactic acidosis) like fast breathing, fast heartbeat, a heartbeat that does not feel normal, very bad upset stomach or throwing up, feeling very sleepy, shortness of breath, feeling very tired or weak, very bad dizziness, feeling cold, or muscle pain or cramps.

## **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:

- Headache.
- Belly pain or heartburn.
- Feeling tired or weak.
- Cough.
- Upset stomach.

- Back pain.
- Joint pain.
- Diarrhea.

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.

## **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 this drug with food.
- It is important that you do not miss or skip a dose of this drug during treatment.
- 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 on dialysis and are taking this drug on the day you get dialysis, take it after your dialysis. If you have questions, talk with your doctor.

## **What do I do if I miss a dose?**

- Take a missed dose as soon as you think about it, with food.
- 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.
- If you are not sure what to do if you miss a dose, call your doctor.

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

- Store in the original container at room temperature.
- Keep lid tightly closed.
- Store 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.
- Keep a list of all your drugs (prescription, natural products, vitamins, OTC) with you. Give this list to your doctor.
- Talk with the doctor before starting any new drug, including prescription or OTC, natural products, or vitamins.
- 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.
- 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 information should not be used to decide whether or not to take this medicine or any other medicine. Only the healthcare provider has the knowledge and training to decide which medicines are right for a specific patient. This information does not endorse any medicine as safe, effective, or approved for treating any patient or health condition. This is only a brief summary of general information about this medicine. It does NOT include all information about the possible uses, directions, warnings, precautions, interactions, adverse effects, or risks that may apply to this medicine. This information is not specific medical advice and does not replace information you receive from the healthcare provider. You must talk with the healthcare provider for complete information about the risks and benefits of using this

medicine.

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If you have any questions, contact a member of your healthcare team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5:00 PM, during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit [www.mskcc.org/pe](http://www.mskcc.org/pe) to search our virtual library.

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