

# cabotegravir (Vocabria®) rilpivirine (Edurant®)

30 mg – white, oval tablet  
25 mg – off-white, round tablet

## What are cabotegravir and rilpivirine?

Cabotegravir and rilpivirine oral tablets are antiretroviral (“ARV”) medicines, taken together to lower the amount of HIV virus in your body and make your immune system stronger. The goal of HIV treatment is to have an “undetectable” HIV viral load.

In discussion with your healthcare provider, cabotegravir and rilpivirine tablets may be used:

- In the month before you begin Cabenuva® (cabotegravir and rilpivirine) injections, these medicines are taken by mouth to test how well you tolerate the medicines.
- If you are getting Cabenuva® injections, and plan to delay an injection visit, these medicines may be taken by mouth until the next scheduled injection.

## How do I take these medicines?

- Take one tablet EACH of cabotegravir and rilpivirine once daily. Take them together, at the same time every day.
- Always take these medicines with a full meal to make sure the medicine is absorbed into your body.
- Do NOT take cabotegravir and rilpivirine at the same time as calcium, iron or magnesium supplements, or at the same time as antacids or medicines that decrease stomach acid. (See *Can I take other medicines?*, next page).
- Store the medicine in a dry place at room temperature, and keep it out of reach of children.

## What if I forget to take these medicines?

It is very important to take cabotegravir and rilpivirine tablets every day to make sure the medicine keeps working. If you miss a dose, there is a chance that the virus will change to a form that is harder to treat. This is called "drug resistance".

If you miss a dose, take the medicine as soon as you remember, then continue on your usual schedule. If it is almost time for your next dose, do not take a double dose. If you are not sure if you should take your dose, call the pharmacist.

If you stop taking HIV medicines, the amount of HIV virus in your blood will increase.

**Do not stop taking any of your HIV medicines without talking to your healthcare provider.**

## What should I expect?

Cabotegravir and rilpivirine are usually well tolerated. Side effects may include:

- nausea or vomiting
- diarrhea
- stomach pain
- dizziness
- weight gain
- trouble sleeping
- abnormal dreams
- feeling tired
- headache

Rare, serious side effects may include:

- Allergic reaction: Signs include rash, blisters on skin or mouth, swelling of the face or throat, difficulty breathing, fever, flu-like symptoms.



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- Changes in heart beat: Signs include dizziness, fast heart beats, fainting or seizures.
- Mood changes, feeling sad or depressed.
- Liver problems: Signs include yellow skin or eyes, dark urine, pale stools or pain on right side below ribs.

**Always tell your healthcare provider if side effects are bothering you. IMMEDIATELY contact your healthcare provider if you have any serious side effects.**

It is important to have regular blood tests to watch for side effects and make sure your HIV medicine is working to control the virus. Talk to your healthcare provider if you are pregnant, thinking about becoming pregnant, or if you plan to breastfeed.

## Can I take cabotegravir and rilpivirine with other medicines?

Some medicines may interact with cabotegravir or rilpivirine. Drug interactions can stop your treatment from working, or may cause unwanted side effects. Always tell your pharmacist and other healthcare providers if you are using any prescription or non-prescription medicines, vitamins, supplements, natural medicines, or recreational drugs.

Medicines that may interact with cabotegravir or rilpivirine oral tablets include:

- Stomach medicines and supplements:
  - Antacids (Tums<sup>®</sup>, Maalox<sup>®</sup>, Diovol<sup>®</sup>), calcium, iron or magnesium supplements may be taken at least 2 hours before or 4 hours after taking cabotegravir and rilpivirine.
  - Some stomach medicines (H2 blockers) such as ranitidine (Zantac<sup>®</sup>),

famotidine (Pepcid AC<sup>®</sup>) may be used, but no more than ONCE a day, and must be taken at least 12 hours before or 4 hours after taking cabotegravir and rilpivirine.

- Proton pump inhibitors (PPI) such as omeprazole (Losec<sup>®</sup>, Olex<sup>®</sup>), esomeprazole (Nexium<sup>®</sup>) or pantoprazole **should NOT be used.**
- Some medicines to treat seizures, such as phenytoin (Dilantin<sup>®</sup>), carbamazepine, or oxcarbazepine.
- Some antibiotics such as rifampin, rifabutin or clarithromycin.
- Some antifungal medicines such as ketoconazole.
- Dexamethasone
- St John's Wort

This is not a complete list of medicines that interact with cabotegravir and rilpivirine.

Always check with your pharmacist before starting any new medicines to make sure they are safe for you.

## What if I have questions?

If you have questions or problems with your medicine, call the St. Paul's Hospital Ambulatory Pharmacy:

**1-888-511-6222**

(Monday to Friday daytime and urgent issues after hours)

To book an appointment to speak with a St. Paul's Hospital pharmacist, call reception:

**604-806-8060**

(Monday to Friday daytime)

This pamphlet is for general information purposes only. It does not provide individual medical or treatment advice and is not a substitute for medical or professional care.

Prepared by St Paul's Hospital Ambulatory Pharmacy Vancouver, BC



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