

Valaciclovir Sandoz®

Tablets for cytomegalovirus

Valaciclovir hydrochloride film-coated tablets

Consumer Medicine Information

What is in this leaflet

This leaflet answers some common questions about Valaciclovir Sandoz.

It does not contain all the available information. It does not take the place of talking to your doctor or pharmacist.

All medicines have risks and benefits. Your doctor has weighed the risks of you taking this medicine against the benefits they expect it will have for you.

If you have any concerns about taking this medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

Keep this leaflet with the medicine.

You may need to read it again.

What Valaciclovir Sandoz is used for

Valaciclovir Sandoz tablets belong to a group of medicines called antivirals.

Valaciclovir Sandoz tablets are used to prevent cytomegalovirus (CMV) infection and disease, following solid organ transplantation. CMV is another type of herpes virus. It can cause symptoms similar to glandular fever (high temperature, sore throat and swollen glands). Valaciclovir Sandoz tablets can help prevent CMV infection and herpes simplex infections.

Ask your doctor if you have any questions about why this medicine has been prescribed for you.

This medicine is not addictive.

Valaciclovir Sandoz is available only with a doctor's prescription.

Before you take Valaciclovir Sandoz

When you must not take it

Do not take this medicine if you have an allergy to:

- valaciclovir hydrochloride, the active ingredient, or to any of the other ingredients listed at the end of this leaflet under Product description.
- any other similar medicines (such as aciclovir).

Some of the symptoms of an allergic reaction may include:

- shortness of breath
- wheezing or difficulty breathing
- swelling of the face, lips, tongue or other parts of the body
- rash, itching or hives on the skin.

Do not take this medicine if you are pregnant, trying to become pregnant or breastfeeding, unless your doctor says you should.

Your doctor will discuss the risks and benefits of using this medicine when pregnant and during breastfeeding.

Do not take this medicine after the expiry date (EXP) printed on the pack or if the packaging is torn or shows signs of tampering.

If it has expired or is damaged, return it to your pharmacist for disposal.

If you are not sure whether you should start taking this medicine, talk to your doctor.

Before you start to take it

Tell your doctor if you have allergies to any other medicines, foods, preservatives or dyes.

Tell your doctor if you have or have had any of the following medical conditions:

- kidney condition
- liver condition
- anaemic (reduced red blood cells or iron stores)

Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant or are breastfeeding.

Your doctor can discuss with you the risks and benefits involved.

Care should be taken to ensure adequate fluid intake in patients who are at risk of dehydration, such as the elderly.

If you have not told your doctor about any of the above, tell him/her before you start taking Valaciclovir Sandoz.

Taking other medicines

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking any other medicines, including any that you get without a prescription from your pharmacy, supermarket or health food shop.

Some medicines and Valaciclovir Sandoz may interfere with each other. These include:

- aminoglycosides, organoplatinum compounds, iodinated contrast media, methotrexate, pentamidine, foscarnet, ciclosporin, and tacrolimus.
- cimetidine, a medicine used to treat heartburn or peptic ulcers
- probenecid, a medicine used to treat gout
- immunosuppressant medicines such as mycophenolate mofetil, ciclosporin and tacrolimus. These medicines are commonly taken by transplant patients and require close attention.

These medicines may be affected by Valaciclovir Sandoz or may affect how well it works. You may need different amounts of your medicines, or you may need to take different medicines.

Your doctor and pharmacist have more information on medicines to be careful with or avoid while taking this medicine.

Use in children

There is not enough information to recommend the use of this medicine in children.

How to take Valaciclovir Sandoz

Follow all directions given to you by your doctor or pharmacist carefully.

They may differ from the information contained in this leaflet.

If you do not understand the instructions, ask your doctor or pharmacist for help.

How much to take

If you have been prescribed this medicine to prevent CMV infection and disease, the usual dose for adults and children over 12 years of age is four 500mg tablets four times a day for 90 days.

If you have a kidney disease your doctor may reduce your dose.

Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you are unsure of the correct dose for you.

They will tell you exactly how much to take.

Follow the instructions they give you.

If you take the wrong dose, Valaciclovir Sandoz may not work as well.

How to take it

Swallow the tablets whole with a full glass of water.

You should drink plenty of fluids while taking this medicine, especially if you are elderly.

Do not chew them.

When to take Valaciclovir Sandoz

Take your medicine at about the same time each day.

Taking it at the same time each day will have the best effect. It will also help you remember when to take it.

To prevent CMV infection and disease, the tablets should be taken four times a day (i.e. morning, noon, afternoon and evening).

How long to take Valaciclovir Sandoz

For the prevention of CMV infection and disease, the usual course of treatment is 90 days.

Do not stop taking your medicine before the course of treatment is finished because you feel better, unless otherwise advised by your doctor.

If you forget to take it

Take your dose as soon as you remember, and continue to take it as you would normally.

If it is almost time for your next dose, skip the dose you missed and take your next dose when you are meant to.

Do not take a double dose to make up for the dose that you missed.

This may increase the chance of you getting an unwanted side effect.

If you miss more than one dose or are not sure what to do, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

If you have trouble remembering to take your medicine, ask your pharmacist for some hints.

If you take too much (overdose)

Immediately telephone your doctor or the Poisons Information Centre (telephone 13 11 26) for advice, or go to Accident and Emergency at the nearest hospital, if you think that you or anyone else may have taken too much Valaciclovir Sandoz. Do this even if there are no signs of discomfort or poisoning.

You may need urgent medical attention.

Symptoms of an overdose may include:

- agitation
- confusion or imagining sights or sounds (hallucinations)
- drowsiness
- nausea and vomiting.

While you are taking Valaciclovir Sandoz

Things you must do

If you are about to be started on any new medicine, remind your doctor and pharmacist that you are taking Valaciclovir Sandoz.

Tell any other doctors, dentists, and pharmacists who treat you that you are taking this medicine.

If you become pregnant or are trying to become pregnant or intend to breastfeed while taking this medicine, tell your doctor immediately.

Drink plenty of water while you are taking Valaciclovir Sandoz.

Tell your doctor if your symptoms are not improving or are worsening while you are taking Valaciclovir Sandoz.

Tell your doctor if, for any reason, you have not taken your medicine exactly as prescribed.

Otherwise, your doctor may think that it was not effective and change your treatment unnecessarily.

Things you must not do

Do not take Valaciclovir Sandoz to treat any other complaints unless your doctor tells you to.

Do not give your medicine to anyone else, even if they have the same condition as you.

Do not stop taking Valaciclovir Sandoz, or change the dose, without first checking with your doctor.

Things to be careful of

Be careful driving or operating heavy machinery until you know how Valaciclovir Sandoz affects you.

This medicine may cause dizziness, confusion and drowsiness in some people. If you have any of these symptoms, do not drive, operate machinery or do anything else that could be dangerous.

Valaciclovir should be discontinued if central nervous system adverse reactions occur.

Side effects

Tell your doctor or pharmacist as soon as possible if you do not feel well while you are taking Valaciclovir Sandoz.

All medicines can have side effects. Sometimes they are serious, most of the time they are not. You may need medical attention if you get some of the side effects.

Some of these side effects (such as those marked * below) can only be found when your doctor does test from time to time.

Do not be alarmed by the following lists of side effects. You may not experience any of them.

Ask your doctor or pharmacist to answer any questions you may have.

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you notice any of the following and they worry you. These are the most commonly reported side effects:

- headache
- nausea and other gastrointestinal discomfort (vomiting, diarrhoea, constipation, abdominal pain, indigestion)
- muscle aches or pains

- hallucinations
- confusion, difficulty thinking
- dizziness, drowsiness
- anaemia*
- high blood pressure*

Allergic reactions to this medicine are rare. However, if you think you are having an allergic reaction, tell your doctor or pharmacist immediately or go to your casualty department at your nearest hospital. Symptoms usually include some or all of the following:

- wheezing
- swelling of the lips/mouth
- difficulty breathing
- hay fever
- lumpy rash ("hives")
- fainting

If any of the following happen, tell your doctor immediately or go to Accident and Emergency at your nearest hospital:

- uncoordinated eye and muscle movements, and speech/or difficulty speaking
- decreased consciousness
- psychotic episode
- convulsions or seizures
- unusual bruising or bleeding, tiredness, dizziness, headaches, being short of breath when exercising. These may be signs of anaemia

Some other side-effects of this medicine include:

- skin rash
- sensitivity of skin to UV light, such as development of a rash like sunburn even after short exposure to UV or sun light
- kidney problems, which get better when this medicine is stopped
- liver problems, which get better when this medicine is stopped.

This is not a complete list of all possible side-effects. Others may occur in some people and there may be some side-effects not yet known.

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you notice anything else that is making you feel unwell, even if it is not on this list.

Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you don't understand anything in this list or if you have any questions.

After taking Valaciclovir Sandoz

Storage

Keep your tablets in the original container. If you take it out of its original container it may not keep well.

Keep your medicine in a cool dry place where the temperature stays below 25°C.

Do not store Valaciclovir Sandoz or any other medicine in the bathroom or near a sink. Do not leave it on a window sill or in the car.

Heat and dampness can destroy some medicines.

Keep it where children cannot reach it. A locked cupboard at least one-and-a-half metres above the ground is a good place to store medicines.

Disposal

If your doctor tells you to stop taking this medicine or the expiry date has passed, ask your pharmacist what to do with any medicine that is left over.

Product description

What it looks like

Valaciclovir Sandoz 500mg film-coated tablets - white to off-white capsule shaped film coated tablets with '500' debossed on one side and plain on other side.

Available in blister packs of 10, 30 and 42 film-coated tablets.

Ingredients

Active ingredients:

- valaciclovir hydrochloride

Inactive ingredients:

- microcrystalline cellulose
- crospovidone
- povidone
- magnesium stearate
- Opadry White 13B58802.

This medicine does not contain lactose, sucrose, gluten, tartrazine or any other azo dyes.

Supplier

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