**FAMCICLOVIR (FAMVIR®)**
*125 mg, 250 mg and 500 mg tablets*

**How does this medication work?**

Famciclovir is an antiviral drug used to treat infections caused by the herpes virus responsible for shingles and genital herpes.

Famciclovir does not eliminate the virus, but relieves the pain and speeds healing.

Herpes simplex is transmitted sexually. Famciclovir does not prevent you from transmitting herpes to others. *Always take the necessary precautions.* If you have genital lesions, it is important to avoid sexual contact (genital or oral) or to use a latex condom carefully.

**How do I take this medication?**

**Your dosage**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Famciclovir</th>
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| ____ tablet(s) of _______ mg  
| ____ times a day |

Famciclovir can be taken with or without food.

Famciclovir tablets should be swallowed whole; do not break, crush or chew them.

Famciclovir is more effective when treatment is started as soon as possible after symptoms appear.

Unless your doctor tells you otherwise, take famciclovir with a large glass of water and continue to drink at least 1.5 litres (8 to 10 glasses) of water or other liquids each day. This will help your system to eliminate the medication better.

It is important to take famciclovir regularly, at the same time each day, for the duration of your treatment, even if you feel better after a while.

*Never stop your treatment without first speaking to your doctor.*

**What if I forget to take a dose?**

Take the dose you missed as soon as possible, and then continue with your regular schedule.

If it is nearly time for your next dose, however, just take that one according to the normal schedule. Do not double up doses.

**What are the side effects of this medication?**

Famciclovir is generally well tolerated.

Some people may experience gastrointestinal (digestive) effects such as diarrhea, abdominal pain, nausea and vomiting. To help lessen these, take famciclovir with food. If they occur and persist, consult your pharmacist, doctor or dietician for ways to manage these side effects.

Other side effects such as headache, dizziness and tiredness may occur. *Find out how famciclovir affects you before driving a vehicle or undertaking any activity that requires close attention.*

An allergic reaction may occur on rare occasions. If you notice the appearance of a skin eruption (rash, redness with or without itching), have a fever or difficulty in breathing, *inform your doctor immediately.*
**Before taking famciclovir, tell your doctor** if you have previously had an allergic reaction or other serious side effects with any of the following agents: acyclovir (Zovirax®), valacyclovir (Valtrex®) or ganciclovir (Cytoven®).

**Can I take famciclovir with my other medications?**

Consult your doctor or pharmacist before taking any new medication, whether on prescription or not, any natural products or recreational drugs.

**Can I drink alcohol if I’m on famciclovir?**

Avoid the excessive or regular consumption of alcoholic beverages (beer, wine, spirits) as these may interact with some of your medications.

However, do not miss a dose of your medication because you want to have a drink. Unless your doctor tells you otherwise, reasonable (social) consumption should not be harmful to your health.

**What if I’m pregnant or breast-feeding?**

The effects of famciclovir on pregnancy are not yet known. If you are, or want to become pregnant, talk to your doctor about taking it.

As the virus can be transmitted via maternal milk, breast-feeding is not recommended in women who are HIV-positive.

**Storage**

Keep famciclovir in a dry place, at room temperature (15 to 30°C or 59 to 86°F). Avoid humidity (bathrooms, etc.). Place out of the sight and reach of children.

**General advice**

Always keep your appointments with your doctor and the care team, so that your condition can be closely monitored.

If you have any questions about your medications or need help on how to schedule when to take them, please contact your doctor or pharmacist, who know your medication well.

**Contact person:**

Telephone: __________________________

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Famiclovir - 2  
http://www.jag.on.ca/HIV