**HYDROXYUREA (HYDREA®)**

500-mg Capsule

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**How does this medication work?**

Hydroxyurea is an antimetabolite that helps to slow down multiplication of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) when taken in combination with other antiretrovirals.

Hydroxyurea does not interfere directly with the production of the virus. It’s action causes a decrease in substances required for viral reproduction and this enhances the efficacy of other antiretroviral drugs.

Hydroxyurea does not cure AIDS or kill the virus. There is a permanent risk of transmitting HIV either through sexual or blood contact. It is therefore essential that precautions always be taken (latex condoms, clean syringes, etc.).

Fertile women must use an effective means of birth control.

**How do I take this medication?**

**Your dosage**

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<thead>
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<th>Hydroxyurea</th>
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<tr>
<td>_____ 500-mg capsule(s)</td>
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<td>_____ times a day</td>
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Hydroxyurea may be taken with or without food.

If you have difficulty swallowing the capsule, you can open it and pour the contents into a glass of water, which you should drink immediately.

It is important to take hydroxyurea regularly, at the same time each day, and to keep to this schedule as closely as possible.

*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 at the usual time. Do not double up doses.

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

Side effects encountered with hydroxyurea are diarrhea, nausea, vomiting and loss of appetite. Take hydroxyurea with food to lessen these effects. If they occur and persist, consult your pharmacist, your doctor or your dietician. They can help you find ways to better manage these side effects.

Other side effects include headache, fatigue, drowsiness and dizziness. Make sure you know what effect hydroxyurea has on you before driving your car or undertaking any activity that requires close attention.

Mouth ulcers sometimes occur. Various home-made mouthwashes may be suggested. If you use a commercial mouthwash, it must contain little or no alcohol or phenol. It might also be preferable to dilute it with water.

Hydroxyurea can have an effect on your blood and cause neutropenia, thrombocytopenia or anemia.

Neutropenia is a decrease in the number of white blood cells (required to combat infection).

Thrombocytopenia is a decrease in the number of blood platelets (required for coagulation). Symptoms include bruising or unexplained bleeding.
Contact your doctor if your stools are very dark, there is blood in your urine, red spots appear on your skin or you have an open wound that is slow to heal.

Anemia is a decrease in the number of red blood cells. Symptoms include shortness of breath, fatigue or unusual weakness, loss of appetite or pallor. Contact your doctor if these symptoms appear.

Inform your doctor and your pharmacist of any troublesome side effects.

Can I take hydroxyurea with my other medications?

Hydroxyurea may interact with other drugs. Consult your doctor or pharmacist before taking any new prescription or non-prescription medication, natural product or recreational drug.

Can I drink alcohol if I’m on hydroxyurea?

Avoid excessive or regular consumption of alcohol (beer, wine or hard liquor); alcohol may interact with some of your medications.

Unless otherwise indicated by your physician, a moderate alcohol consumption (social drinking) should not affect your health. Do not skip a dose of your medication because you want a drink.

What if I’m pregnant or breast-feeding?

Hydroxyurea must not be taken by pregnant women.

Since the virus can be transmitted through maternal milk, breast-feeding is not recommended in HIV-positive women.

Storage

Hydroxyurea must be kept away from light and humidity. Keep hydroxyurea in a dry place at room temperature (15-30°C or 59-86°F). Avoid humidity (bathrooms, etc.).

Keep out of sight and reach of children.

General advice

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

If you have any questions about your medications or need help to schedule when to take them, please contact your doctor or pharmacist, who is familiar with what you are taking.

Contact Person: ______________________
Telephone: ______________________