

# Zidovudine

zye-DOE-vyoo-deen

**Brand Name:** Retrovir

**Drug Class:** Nucleoside Reverse Transcriptase Inhibitors

Zidovudine, also known as AZT, ZDV, or Retrovir, is a type of medicine called a nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor (NRTI). NRTIs block reverse transcriptase, a protein that HIV needs to make more copies of itself.

## HIV/AIDS-Related Uses

Zidovudine was approved by the FDA on March 19, 1987, with other antiretroviral agents for the treatment of HIV infection in adults and in children 3 months of age or older. This medicine is also approved for use in HIV infected women to prevent the virus from being passed to their babies during pregnancy and delivery. It is then given to these babies for the first 6 weeks of life. Although the FDA does not approve this practice, zidovudine may be used to prevent workers from getting HIV infection after they accidentally come into contact with the virus on the job.

This medicine does not cure or prevent HIV infection or AIDS and does not reduce the risk of passing the virus to other people.

## Dosage Form/Administration

Zidovudine comes in capsule, tablet, and solution forms that are taken by mouth and in liquid form that is given by intravenous infusion into a vein. Zidovudine has been combined with other antiretroviral drugs in single tablet form. Lamivudine and zidovudine are available in a single tablet called Combivir. Abacavir, lamivudine, and zidovudine are available in a single tablet called Trizivir.

## Recommended Daily Dose

The recommended dose of zidovudine is 600 mg a day (either 300 mg twice a day or 200 mg three times a day).

The recommended dose in pediatric patients aged 6 weeks to 18 years should be determined by body weight or body surface area. Dosing by weight is as follows: For pediatric patients who weigh from 4 kg to less than 9 kg, a total daily dose of 24 mg/kg should be given in equal doses twice or three times daily. For pediatric patients who weigh from 9 kg to less than 30 kg, a total daily dose of 18 mg/kg should be given in equal doses twice or three times

daily. For pediatric patients who weigh 30kg or more, 600 mg per day should be given in equal doses twice or three times daily.

The recommended dosing regimen for pregnant women who are at least 14 weeks into their pregnancy is 100 mg five times a day until the start of labor. Intravenous zidovudine should be given during labor and delivery. The newborn should receive zidovudine by mouth every 6 hours starting within 12 hours after birth and continuing through 6 weeks of age. The recommended dose of zidovudine for the infant is based on the infant's weight.

Some individuals may benefit from different doses of zidovudine. The recommended dose for individuals on dialysis is 100 mg every 6 to 8 hours. Individuals should always take zidovudine as prescribed by their doctors.

## Contraindications

Individuals should tell a doctor about any medical problems before taking this medicine.

## Possible Side Effects

Along with its desired effects, zidovudine can cause some unwanted effects, including pale skin, unusual tiredness or weakness, fever, chills, or sore throat. Individuals should tell a doctor if they have any of these side effects.

Other side effects may not be serious and may lessen or disappear with continued use of the medicine. Less serious side effects of this medicine include severe headache, trouble sleeping, muscle soreness, and nausea. Individuals should tell a doctor if these side effects continue or are bothersome.

## Drug and Food Interactions

A doctor should be notified of any other medications being taken, including prescription,

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## **Drug and Food Interactions (cont.)**

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nonprescription (over-the-counter), or herbal medications.

## **Clinical Trials**

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For information on clinical trials that involve Zidovudine, visit the ClinicalTrials.gov web site at <http://www.clinicaltrials.gov>. In the Search box, enter: Zidovudine AND HIV Infections.

## **Manufacturer Information**

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Zidovudine  
GlaxoSmithKline  
5 Moore Drive  
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709  
(888) 825-5249

Zidovudine  
Cipla Ltd  
Mumbai Central  
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912223082891

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## **For More Information**

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Contact your doctor or an AIDSinfo Health Information Specialist:

- Via Phone: 1-800-448-0440 Monday - Friday, 12:00 p.m. (Noon) - 5:00 p.m. ET
- Via Live Help: [http://aidsinfo.nih.gov/live\\_help](http://aidsinfo.nih.gov/live_help) Monday - Friday, 12:00 p.m. (Noon) - 4:00 p.m. ET