# Abacavir/Lamivudine

***a-BAK-a-veer, la-MI-vyoo-deen***

**Brand Name:** **Epzicom**

**Drug Class:** **Nucleoside Reverse Transcriptase Inhibitors**

Epzicom is a combination of two antiretroviral drugs: abacavir sulfate (Ziagen) and lamivudine (Epivir). Both of these medicines are nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors (NRTIs). NRTIs block reverse transcriptase, a protein that HIV needs to make more copies of itself.

## HIV/AIDS-Related Uses

Abacavir sulfate and lamivudine are approved individually by the FDA for the treatment of HIV infection in adults and children. Because these two medicines are frequently prescribed together, the manufacturer has combined them into one tablet. Epzicom was approved by the FDA on August 2, 2004, for use with other antiretroviral agents in the treatment of HIV infection in adults. Epzicom should be used in combination with other types of anti-HIV drugs.

Epzicom 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

Epzicom comes in tablet form and is taken by mouth.

## Recommended Daily Dose

The recommended dosage of Epzicom is one tablet (abacavir sulfate 600 mg and lamivudine 300 mg) daily. Some individuals, such as those with kidney or liver disease, may require different doses of abacavir or lamivudine. Individuals requiring different doses should not take Epzicom.

## Contraindications

Warnings and side effects of Epzicom may be similar to those of abacavir and lamivudine taken individually. (See individual drug fact sheets for abacavir and lamivudine for more information.) Individuals who have experienced a serious allergic reaction to abacavir should not take Epzicom. Individuals who test positive for HLA B*5701, a marker for this serious allergic reaction, should not receive Epzicom. Individuals who have liver disease or poor kidney function should not take this medicine.

## Possible Side Effects

Along with its desired effects, Epzicom can cause some unwanted effects. Epzicom contains abacavir sulfate, which has caused serious allergic reactions, some resulting in death. Severe allergic reactions usually occur during the first 6 weeks of taking the drug but can occur at any time. Individuals should stop taking this medicine and tell a doctor right away if any of the following symptoms occur: sudden fever, skin rash, severe tiredness or achiness, diarrhea, nausea,vomiting, stomach pain, sore throat, shortness of breath, cough, or a general ill feeling. These symptoms are listed on the prescription's warning card, which the patient should carry. If a doctor suspects an allergic reaction, the individual should never take abacavir or an abacavir-containing medicine again. Individuals should tell a doctor if they have any of these side effects.

The medicines in Epzicom can cause a sometimes fatal lactic acid accumulation and liver disease, as well as blood problems or muscle weakness. A doctor should be notified if an individual taking this medication experiences digestive system problems, joint or muscle pain and weakness, pain or tingling of hands or feet, headache, dizziness, or unusual tiredness. 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, nonprescription (over-the-counter), or herbal medications.

## Clinical Trials

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

# Abacavir/Lamivudine

## Manufacturer Information

Abacavir/Lamivudine
GlaxoSmithKline
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Research Triangle Park, NC 27709
(888) 825-5249

Epzicom
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5 Moore Drive
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## For More Information

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 Monday - Friday, 12:00 p.m. (Noon) - 4:00 p.m. ET