

Carrageenan

kar-a-GEE-nan

Brand Name: Carraguard

Drug Class: Microbicides

Carrageenan is a chemical found in certain types of seaweed. Scientists have discovered that carrageenan can protect laboratory cells from becoming infected with many viruses, including HIV.

Carrageenan is being studied as an experimental HIV microbicide called Carraguard, or PC-515. Microbicides are substances that protect the body from infection by microorganisms such as bacteria, viruses, and fungi. Microbicides work by either destroying the microbes or preventing them from establishing an infection.

HIV/AIDS-Related Uses

Carrageenan is an investigational medicine that is not yet approved by the FDA for use outside of clinical trials. It is being studied for the prevention of HIV infection and other sexually transmitted diseases. This medicine does not cure HIV infection or AIDS and is being studied to reduce the risk of passing the virus to other people.

A completed Phase III study found that carrageenan alone was safe to use vaginally but was not effective at preventing HIV infection when compared with a placebo gel. Carrageenan is also being studied in combination with other investigational microbicides to increase the effectiveness of HIV prevention.

Dosage Form/Administration

Carrageenan comes as a vaginal gel.

Contraindications

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

Possible Side Effects

Along with its desired effects, carrageenan may cause some unwanted effects. Although not all of these effects are known, mild vaginal itching, burning, and pain have been reported.

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 Carrageenan, visit the ClinicalTrials.gov web site at <http://www.clinicaltrials.gov>. In the Search box, enter: Carrageenan AND HIV Infections.

Manufacturer Information

Carrageenan
FMC Biopolymer
1735 Market Street
Philadelphia, PA 10021

Carrageenan
Population Council
Center for Biomedical Research
Weiss Research Building
1230 York Avenue
New York, NY 10021

Carraguard
Population Council
Center for Biomedical Research
Weiss Research Building
1230 York Avenue
New York, NY 10021

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