

Who is the leaflet for?

This leaflet is for patients starting on treatment with lamivudine for hepatitis B infection to provide an overview of treatment and important information.

What is lamivudine for and how do I take it?

Lamivudine is commonly used for patients with hepatitis B. It is a tablet which should be taken by mouth and the usual dose is 100mg once a day. Your doctor or nurse specialist may prescribe a different dose if there are problems with your kidney function.

It is usually continued long-term and should not be stopped without discussion with your doctor or nurse specialist.

Are there any problems with taking lamivudine?

Broadly, lamivudine is safe and well tolerated. You will probably not run into problems when taking it, but you should be aware of the following issues.

Side effects

It is common for patients to have changes in their blood tests whilst taking lamivudine. This is not usually a problem and will be monitored by your Doctor or liver nurse.

The most common side effects from lamivudine include muscle pain/ cramps, rash and itching. Some patients suffer from tiredness, abdominal pain or nausea.

Should you become very unwell soon after starting the medication, please contact your Doctor or liver nurse.

Missed doses

To prevent viral mutation and liver damage, it is very important that you do not miss doses of lamivudine. If you do miss a dose, but remember within twelve hours then take your usual dose. If it is more than twelve hours then skip the missed dose, but take your next dose when it is due.

Pregnancy

Should you wish to plan a pregnancy on lamivudine this should be discussed carefully with your doctor or nurse first. Otherwise, you should use contraception before you take the treatment and for at least six weeks afterwards.

Breast feeding

Should you wish to breast-feed whilst taking lamivudine this should be discussed carefully with your doctor or nurse first.

Can I spread hepatitis B whilst I am on treatment?

Treatment with lamivudine for hepatitis B does not stop you from passing the infection on, so make sure that you continue to take appropriate preventative measures. These can be discussed in more detail with your Doctor or liver nurse.

Are there any problems taking lamivudine with any other medications?

Lamivudine is not known to affect other medication or to be affected by other medication. However, there are 2 specific medicines it should not be taken with: cladribine or emtricitabine. If you are taking or due to start these medicines contact your Doctor.

Further information

Further information about your tablet can be found in the patient information leaflet found in the tablet/capsule box or on the container.

Further information on hepatitis B can be found on the following websites:

- The British Liver Trust (www.britishlivertrust.org.uk)
- www.patient.co.uk
- www.easternliver.net