

RIFAMPICIN and SODIUM FUSIDATE (FUSIDIC ACID)

Rifampicin and sodium fusidate are two antibiotics taken together to treat certain bacterial infections.

Reason for antibiotic:	
Planned duration:	
My doctor's name:	
Doctor's contact details:	

How do I take rifampicin and sodium fusidate?

- Both rifampicin and sodium fusidate work best when taken on an empty stomach, **at least an hour before food or two hours after food**. Sodium fusidate may be taken with or soon after food if it upsets your stomach.

What do I need to be aware of before I take rifampicin and sodium fusidate?

- Discuss any **pre-existing medical conditions** with your doctor.
- Discuss other **medicines you are currently taking, plan to start taking or plan to stop taking** (including herbal and over-the-counter medicines) with your doctor and/or pharmacist. This is to ensure rifampicin and sodium fusidate are safe to take together with your current medicines.
- Rifampicin may **reduce the effect of the oral contraceptive pill**. Women who are taking rifampicin should talk to their doctor about which forms of contraception are suitable.

The information contained in this brochure is for educational purposes only and is not intended as a substitute for consultation with a doctor or health care professional. Ask your pharmacist or doctor if you have any additional questions or would like more detailed information about this medicine. **Last reviewed:** 30th October 2023 | **Next review** by November 2026.

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- Sodium fusidate may interact with some medicines used to treat **high cholesterol**. Talk to your doctor if you are taking cholesterol medicine so they can advise if any changes are required.
- **Pregnancy:** Contact your doctor to discuss if rifampicin and sodium fusidate are safe for you to take during pregnancy.
- **Breastfeeding:** Rifampicin and sodium fusidate are considered safe in breastfeeding. The breastfed infant should be monitored for potential side effects such as fever, vomiting, diarrhoea, skin rash and thrush. Rifampicin may cause an orange-red colouration of your breastmilk; this is harmless.

What do I need to be aware of while taking rifampicin and sodium fusidate?

- To make sure the antibiotics work the best they can and to reduce allergic reactions, it is important to take rifampicin and sodium fusidate as prescribed by your doctor and to not miss doses.

Common side effects of rifampicin and sodium fusidate:

- **Nausea and vomiting;** usually mild and improves over a few days.
- **Diarrhoea;** usually improves over a few days. If diarrhoea occurs, avoid anti-diarrhoeal medicines such as loperamide (the active ingredient in Imodium® or Gastro-Stop®), unless advised by your doctor. See your doctor if you have frequent and watery diarrhoea.
- Rifampicin may cause your **urine, tears, saliva and sweat to turn an orange-red colour**. This is harmless and nothing for you to worry about. If you wear soft contact lenses, rifampicin may cause your lenses to become discoloured. If this affects you, speak with your doctor or optometrist. They may advise you to wear glasses instead whilst taking rifampicin.
- Rifampicin may cause **joint and/or muscle aches and pains (in the first weeks), headache, dizziness, tiredness and weakness**. Let your doctor know if these side effects bother you.

PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

Rare reactions and/or side effects of rifampicin and sodium fusidate to be aware of:

- **Allergic reactions** such as a rash, itch, blisters or red skin spots; stop taking these medicines and see your doctor if this occurs.
- **Signs of a serious allergic reaction**, such as difficulty breathing or swelling of the face, eyes or lips; call for an **ambulance** immediately OR present to the **accident and emergency department** at your nearest hospital immediately.
- **Changes in liver function**; signs of liver problems include loss of appetite, severe nausea or vomiting, dark urine, pale stools and yellowing of the eyes or skin. During prolonged treatment (for example, longer than 2 weeks), your doctor may request a blood test to check your liver function.
- **Reduced blood cells in your body**; signs include unexplained tiredness, shortness of breath when exercising, dizziness, bleeding, bruising or looking pale. During prolonged treatment (for example, longer than 2 weeks), your doctor may request a blood test to check the number of blood cells in your body.