

RIFAMPICIN

Rifampicin is an antibiotic used to treat certain bacterial infections.
It will not work against viral infections such as colds and flu.

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

How do I take rifampicin?

- Rifampicin works best when taken on an empty stomach, **at least half an hour (30 minutes) before food or two hours after food.**

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

- 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 is 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.
- Pregnancy:** Contact your doctor to discuss if rifampicin is safe for you to take during pregnancy.
- Breastfeeding:** Rifampicin is considered safe in breastfeeding. The breastfed infant should be monitored for potential side effects such as fever, vomiting, diarrhoea and skin rash. Rifampicin may cause an orange-red colouration of your breastmilk; this is harmless.

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

- To make sure the antibiotic works the best it can and to reduce allergic reactions, it is important to take rifampicin as prescribed by your doctor and to not miss doses.

Common side effects of rifampicin:

- **Nausea and vomiting;** usually mild and improves over a few days.
- 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.

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

- **Allergic reactions** such as a rash, itch, blisters or red skin spots; stop taking this medicine and see your doctor.
- **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.