

# Triumeq

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## What is *Triumeq*?

*Triumeq* is a medication used to treat HIV. It is a combination of three separate antiretroviral drugs in one pill, taken once a day.

It combines 50mg dolutegravir, 600mg abacavir and 300mg lamivudine in an oval, film-coated purple tablet. The tablet has '572 Tri' on one side.

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## How does *Triumeq* work?

*Triumeq* combines three drugs in one pill. Two of the drugs (abacavir and lamivudine) are from a class of drugs known as nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors (NRTIs) and one drug (dolutegravir) is an integrase inhibitor. Each drug class works against HIV in a different way.

The aim of HIV treatment is to reduce the level of HIV (the 'viral load') in your body until it is undetectable – usually less than 50 copies of virus per ml of blood. Taking HIV treatment and having an undetectable viral load protects your immune system and stops HIV being passed on to someone else during sex.

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## How do I take *Triumeq*?

You should take *Triumeq* once a day. It can be taken with or without food.

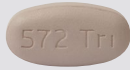
HIV treatment works best if you take it every day, ideally at the same time each day. It may help to set an alarm, e.g. on your mobile phone, to remind you. If you forget to take a dose of *Triumeq* and realise within 20 hours of the time you usually take it, take it as soon as possible then take your next dose at your usual time. If you realise with less than four hours left until your next dose, don't take a double dose, just skip the dose you've forgotten and then carry on with your normal routine

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## What are the side-effects of *Triumeq*?

All medicines have possible side-effects. It's a good idea to talk to your doctor, nurse or pharmacist about what to expect before you start taking any medication, and how to manage any side-effects which occur.

A full list of side-effects, including less common side-effects, can be found in the patient information leaflet that comes with *Triumeq*.



Side-effects can be described as:

**Common** – a side-effect that occurs in at least one in a hundred people (more than 1%) who take this drug.

**Uncommon** – a side-effect that occurs in fewer than one in a hundred people (less than 1%) who take this drug.

Common side-effects of *Triumeq* include (most common in **bold**):

- **difficulty sleeping, headache, fatigue**, dizziness, abnormal dreams
- **nausea (feeling sick), diarrhoea**, loss of appetite, indigestion, flatulence, feeling bloated
- muscle pain and discomfort, rash, hair loss, depression

**Important warning:** Abacavir and dolutegravir, two of the active ingredients in *Triumeq*, can cause a serious hypersensitivity (allergic) reaction. It is important that you discuss this with your doctor or pharmacist before taking *Triumeq*, and **read the alert card and manufacturer's patient information leaflet that comes with your *Triumeq* tablets.**

A hypersensitivity reaction to abacavir is associated with a particular gene. Before starting treatment with *Triumeq* (or any other treatment that contains abacavir), you will have a genetic test called 'HLA-B\*5701'. If the test is positive, you should not take *Triumeq* or any other treatment that contains abacavir. If the test is negative, it is very unlikely you would have a reaction to the drug, but it makes good sense to look out for symptoms, particularly during the first six weeks of taking the drug.

The most common symptoms of a hypersensitivity reaction are rash and fever, plus other symptoms including:

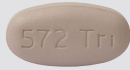
- shortness of breath, sore throat or cough
- nausea or vomiting, or diarrhoea or abdominal pain
- severe tiredness or achiness, or generally feeling ill.

You should see a doctor immediately (or go to A&E if out of hours) if you think you are having a hypersensitivity reaction.

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## Does *Triumeq* interact with other drugs?

You should always tell your doctor and pharmacist about any other drugs or medication you are taking. That includes anything prescribed by another doctor, medicines you have bought from a high-street chemist, herbal and alternative treatments, and recreational or party drugs ('chems').



Some medicines or drugs are not safe if taken together – the interaction could cause increased, dangerous levels, or it could stop one or both of the drugs from working. Other drug interactions are less dangerous but still need to be taken seriously. If levels of one drug are affected, you may need to change the dose you take. This must only be done on the advice of your HIV doctor.

If you are taking *Triumeq* it's important to check with your HIV doctor or pharmacist before taking any medicines from the following groups:

- antibiotics
- antiepileptic medicines
- herbal medicines – in particular St John's Wort should be avoided
- metformin (a tablet to treat diabetes) – levels of this drug can be increased by *Triumeq*; your doctor may need to decrease the dose

Taking calcium, iron, magnesium or aluminium can stop you from absorbing *Triumeq* properly – all multivitamin and mineral supplements and antacids must be taken at least six hours before or two hours after *Triumeq*.

The patient information leaflet which comes with your *Triumeq* has a full list of medicines which should be avoided.

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## Can I take *Triumeq* in pregnancy?

*Triumeq* is not currently recommended for women during pregnancy.

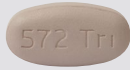
If you are considering having a baby, or think you might be pregnant, talk to your doctor as soon as possible about which drug combination would be right for you. It is important to take antiretroviral treatment during pregnancy to prevent passing HIV from mother to baby.

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## Talking to your doctor

If you have any concerns about your treatment or other aspects of your health, it's important to talk about these. For example, if you have any symptom or side-effect which may be from your treatment, or if you are finding it difficult to take your medication every day, one of your healthcare team will be able to help.

Building a relationship with a doctor may take time. You may feel very comfortable talking to your doctor, but some people find it more difficult, particularly when talking about sex, mental health, or symptoms they find embarrassing. It's also easy to forget things you wanted to talk about.



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Preparing for an appointment can be very helpful. Take some time to think about what you are going to say. You might find it helpful to talk to someone else first, or to make some notes and bring them to your appointment. Our online tool *Talking points* may help you to prepare for your next appointment – visit [www.aidsmap.com/talking-points](http://www.aidsmap.com/talking-points)

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We recommend that this information should always be used in conjunction with professional medical advice.

This factsheet is produced by an organisation called NAM, and has been reviewed by members of our volunteer panels of people living with HIV and medical professionals. We welcome your feedback on our information resources.

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