

TACROLIMUS

Other names: Tacrolimus Sandoz



Important note: The following information is intended to add to, not replace, the knowledge and judgment of your doctor, pharmacist or other health care professional.

Why you are taking this medicine?

Tacrolimus is an immunosuppressant used to prevent organ rejection in patients who have had a liver, kidney, kidney-pancreas, lung or heart transplant. It is also used in the treatment of acute organ rejection after a solid organ transplant.

When to take this medicine

- Tacrolimus should be taken regularly twice a day. Space doses 12 hours apart for best effect.
- The medicine can be taken with or without food but always take it in the same way each time.
- **DO NOT STOP** taking this medication without consulting your doctor.

If you miss a dose

- Take the missed dose as soon as you remember if it is within six hours of your usual dosage time.
- If a dose is missed by more than six hours, skip that dose and go back to your normal dosing schedule. Do not 'double-up' the dose as this may increase side effects.
- It is very important to take tacrolimus exactly as prescribed by your doctor as missing even a few doses can increase your chances of organ rejection.

Important information

- You will need regular blood tests to check your tacrolimus blood level and to make sure that you are getting the correct amount of the medicine. On the day that your tacrolimus blood level is to be measured do not take your morning dose of tacrolimus until after your blood test.
- Tacrolimus makes your skin more sensitive to the sun and you may get sunburned more easily. Use a good sunscreen (SPF 30 or more) and wear clothing and sunglasses that protect you from the sun.
- As tacrolimus lowers your body's ability to fight infections consider avoiding exposure to infectious individuals. Contact your doctor straight away if you have any signs of infection such as a high fever, chills, sore throat or pain when passing urine.
- Do not eat grapefruit or drink grapefruit juice while you are on tacrolimus. Grapefruit can affect the absorption of tacrolimus.

Side Effects

Unfortunately as well as having good effects, most medicines have some effects on your body that are unwanted. These are called *side effects*.

Call your doctor **immediately** if you have any of these side effects:

- Unusual tiredness
- Bleeding
- Easy bruising

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if any of these side effects are of a concern to you:

- Nausea
- Vomiting or diarrhoea
- Loss of appetite
- Hair thinning
- Headache
- Blurred vision
- Tremors
- Sleeping difficulties
- Muscle cramps
- Tingling in the hands and feet

The list of side effects is **not** complete. Tell your doctor or pharmacist if any side effect is of a concern to you.

Tacrolimus may also cause high blood pressure, high blood sugars, increased cholesterol levels and may affect your kidney function. Your doctor will be monitoring for all of these conditions and treat them if necessary.

Other Medicines

Tacrolimus can interact with several medicines. It is **very** important to always check with your doctor or pharmacist before starting any new medications including herbal or complementary medicines or those you can buy without a prescription.

Seek medical advice before having any immunisations.

Storage

Keep all medicines out of the reach of children.

Read this leaflet and discuss any questions you have about your medicines with your doctor or pharmacist.