

# Reaching your goals with COMBIVIR® (lamivudine 150 mg/zidovudine 300 mg) Tablets in combination therapy

## You and your doctor have the same goals:

To fight HIV and help you live a longer, healthier life.

On this information sheet, we will look at how COMBIVIR can help you meet those goals. COMBIVIR is the first HIV treatment to combine two potent medicines in one tablet.

COMBIVIR is not a cure for HIV infection/AIDS and does not prevent passing HIV to others.

If you are already taking HIV medications or thinking about starting, this information sheet may give you answers to some important questions you may have about therapy.

Successful treatment depends on knowing how to get the most from your medicines over a long period of time. Staying on medication and working together with your doctor is a smart way to reach your goals.

If you have more questions after reading this information sheet, including whether COMBIVIR may be right for you, please be sure to speak with your doctor or other healthcare provider.

## Goal #1: Understanding HIV therapy

### What is the goal of therapy for HIV?

The goal of HIV therapy is to bring your viral load down and your CD4 cell count up. Viral load is the amount of virus in your blood at any given time. CD4s (also called T cells or T-helper cells) are cells that are part of your body's defense system. These cells help protect you from certain kinds of serious infections.

Successful therapy will help you to protect your health over the long term.

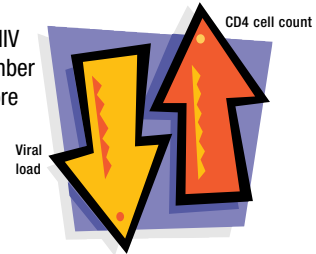
### How does HIV therapy help me?

When viral load goes up, it means HIV is multiplying quickly and destroying more of the CD4 cells that protect you from infections and disease. You begin to feel tired and run down, and you get sick easily.

But when viral load goes down, it means that less HIV is in your blood. This usually helps increase the number of CD4 cells you have. You may feel better, have more energy, and be less likely to become seriously ill.

### What is “undetectable” viral load?

When your viral load is so low that it cannot be measured by blood tests, it is called “undetectable.”



### Does “undetectable” mean that HIV is gone?

No. It only means that the amount of virus in your blood is so low that a blood test cannot measure it. You may be healthier, but not cured.

## Goal #2: Choosing your HIV medicines

### What is an “HIV drug cocktail”?

“Cocktail” is slang for HIV combination therapy – three or more medicines taken together. The medicines attack the virus at different stages of its life cycle. Together, they can bring viral load down.

You may also take additional medicines to protect you against infections.

### Which combination therapy is best for me?

You and your doctor will talk about your medical history and your lifestyle and work out a drug combination for you. It's likely that COMBIVIR® (lamivudine 150 mg/zidovudine 300 mg) can be part of that combination.

Whatever therapy your doctor recommends, success will depend on two things: the overall potency of the medicines in the combination and your commitment to taking them every day.



### What is COMBIVIR?

COMBIVIR is two potent HIV medicines in one tablet: EPIVIR® (lamivudine/3TC) and RETROVIR® (zidovudine/ZDV). COMBIVIR, in combination with other HIV medicines, is indicated for the treatment of HIV infection.

Studies show that COMBIVIR, as part of a combination therapy, can help you live a longer, healthier life. These studies included men and women with HIV: African Americans, whites, and Latinos/as.

COMBIVIR can be part of many therapies now being used to fight HIV over time. COMBIVIR can help reduce viral load, increase CD4 cell count, and protect your immune system. COMBIVIR does not cure HIV infection/AIDS or prevent passing HIV to others.

### Will COMBIVIR have more side effects than EPIVIR + RETROVIR?

No. All HIV drugs have side effects. The side effects that could happen with COMBIVIR should be the same as what could happen with EPIVIR + RETROVIR: headache (35%), upset stomach (33%), fatigue (27%), and nasal signs and symptoms (20%). Make sure to see your doctor regularly because serious side effects can occur, such as muscle damage and a decrease in red and white blood cells. A buildup of lactic acid in the blood and an enlarged liver, including fatal cases, have been seen.

Some patients infected with both hepatitis B virus (HBV) and HIV have worsening of hepatitis after stopping lamivudine (a component of COMBIVIR). Discuss any change in treatment with your doctor. If you have both HBV and HIV and stop treatment with COMBIVIR, you should be closely monitored by your doctor for at least several months.

Changes in body fat may occur in some patients taking antiretroviral therapy. These changes may include an increased amount of fat in the upper back and neck (“buffalo hump”), breast, and around the trunk. Loss of fat from the legs, arms, and face may also occur. The cause and long-term health effects of these conditions are not known at this time.

This information sheet does not cover all the possible uses, actions, warnings, precautions, side effects, or interactions of COMBIVIR® (lamivudine 150 mg/zidovudine 300 mg) with other medicines you may take.

If you have questions about the information provided, ask your doctor or healthcare provider. More information, written in technical medical language for healthcare providers, is available. You can request this information from your doctor, pharmacist, nurse, or counselor.

### Is COMBIVIR the same as EPIVIR + RETROVIR?

Yes. One COMBIVIR Tablet equals:

one EPIVIR Tablet 150 mg + one RETROVIR Tablet 300 mg

OR

one EPIVIR Tablet 150 mg + three RETROVIR Capsules 100 mg



## Goal #3: Fitting medication into your life

### Why is a simpler pill schedule important?

Taking all of your medicines according to their instructions is the best way to reach your goals. However, fitting a pill schedule into your life can be complicated.

COMBIVIR® (lamivudine 150 mg/zidovudine 300 mg) combines two potent medicines in one tablet. Fewer pills every day make combination therapy more convenient for you to take and to stick with over the long term.

### Is COMBIVIR right for me?

COMBIVIR in combination with other HIV medicines is indicated for the treatment of HIV infection.

COMBIVIR has been proven to help many different kinds of people with HIV live longer, healthier lives.

- If you are already taking EPIVIR® (lamivudine/3TC) + RETROVIR® (zidovudine/ZDV), it's easy to switch to COMBIVIR.
- If you have been taking other HIV medicines, you may also be able to switch to COMBIVIR.
- If you are starting combination therapy for the first time, COMBIVIR could fit into your new treatment program.

### How do I take COMBIVIR?

One tablet, morning and night.

### Can I take COMBIVIR with food?

Yes. You can take COMBIVIR with food or without food.

### Who should not take COMBIVIR?

You should not take COMBIVIR if you have had a serious allergic reaction to either lamivudine (also known as EPIVIR or 3TC) or zidovudine (also known as RETROVIR or ZDV).

Do not take COMBIVIR at the same time as EPIVIR, RETROVIR, or other fixed-dose combination products containing lamivudine and zidovudine.

Individual dosing with EPIVIR plus RETROVIR, rather than COMBIVIR, should be considered for:

- A child under 12 years of age
- Anyone who requires dosage adjustments due to drug side effects or poor kidney function

If you are 65 or older, see your doctor about the health of your liver, kidneys, and heart. Make sure that he or she knows *all* of your illnesses and *all* medications that you take. It is possible that the dose of COMBIVIR may need to be changed.

If you are HIV-positive, do not breast-feed, because it's dangerous for your baby. Your baby can get HIV infection or reinfection from breast milk. Bottle-feeding with infant formula will help protect your baby's health.



## Goal #4: Making a commitment to your future

### What control do I have over my HIV therapy?

More than you may think. The three most important keys to reducing viral load are in your hands.

#### 1. Make a personal commitment to your therapy.

To keep the virus down, you must be faithful to your medication schedule every day.

Missing doses or taking even short "drug holidays" gives the virus a chance to change its form (mutate) and multiply. When you start taking your medicines again, they may not work as well.

#### 2. Stay in close touch with your doctor.

If you have any problems taking your medicines, let your doctor know right away.

Some people are bothered by side effects. Others have trouble fitting a pill schedule into their lives.

Your doctor will try to adjust your medicines or schedule so you can stay with your therapy.

#### 3. Keep your medical appointments.

The best way to know if your medicines are working is to have regular blood tests to measure your viral load and CD4 cell count.

At every medical visit, your doctor will have a chance to examine you. At the same time you will have a chance to ask each other questions.



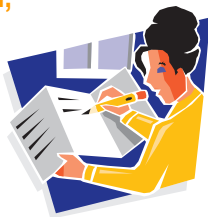
Living a healthy lifestyle – eating nutritious foods, exercising, relaxing, joining a support group – is another smart way to stay healthy and enjoy the future.

## Goal #5: Getting started

### Remember your goals: Viral load down, CD4 cell count up.

#### Checklist for reaching your goals.

- Learn what medication can do for you
- Plan a daily schedule to take your pills
- Get pills ready in advance for a whole day
- Use reminders to take pills on time  
Notes, Refrigerator magnets, Diary
- Prepare to carry pills with you, if necessary
- Keep your medical appointments
- Keep track of your viral load and CD4 cell count
- When you have any questions, ask your doctor or other healthcare provider



### Keep up with the news.

An important part of reaching your goals is keeping up with the latest developments.

The world of HIV is changing daily. New treatment options and new ways to manage the virus are bringing hope to many people living with HIV. Seek as

much information as you can and discuss with your healthcare team.

- Read magazines and newsletters about HIV
- Visit a local HIV/AIDS service organization
- Visit the following Web sites:  
[www.treatHIV.com](http://www.treatHIV.com)    [www.us.gsk.com](http://www.us.gsk.com)    [www.thebody.com](http://www.thebody.com)  
[www.aegis.com](http://www.aegis.com)    [www.projectinform.org](http://www.projectinform.org)    [www.women-alive.org](http://www.women-alive.org)  
[www.cdcnpi.org/hiv/start.htm](http://www.cdcnpi.org/hiv/start.htm)
- Call toll-free 1-888-TREAT HIV

With COMBIVIR® (lamivudine 150 mg/zidovudine 300 mg), GlaxoSmithKline is taking another step toward simplifying combination therapy. COMBIVIR can fit easily into your daily life and with other medications you may be taking. Ask your doctor if COMBIVIR is right for you.

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