



# Maraviroc

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## What is maraviroc?

Maraviroc is a medication used to treat HIV, marketed under the brand name *Celsentri*.

Maraviroc is taken in combination with other antiretroviral drugs. The dose your doctor prescribes for you will depend on the other drugs you are taking. Most people take one pill (either 300mg or 150mg) twice a day.

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## How does maraviroc work?

Maraviroc is from a class of drugs known as CCR5 inhibitors or CCR5 antagonists.

It should only be used by people who have a type of HIV which is 'CCR5 tropic'. Maraviroc works by blocking the CCR5 receptor, which HIV uses to get into blood cells. If you are considering using maraviroc, your HIV clinic will run a tropism test to see whether you have CCR5-tropic HIV. If you do not have it, you should not take maraviroc.

Your doctor will prescribe maraviroc as part of combination HIV treatment, along with antiretrovirals from another class of drugs. It is important to take all the drugs as prescribed, every day. Each drug class works against HIV in a different way.

The aim of HIV treatment is to reduce the level of HIV in your body (viral load). Ideally, your viral load should become so low that 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 maraviroc?

You can take maraviroc with or without food.

HIV treatment works best if you take it every day. When would be a good time for you to plan to take your treatment? Think about your daily routine and when you will find it easiest to take your treatment.

If you forget to take a dose of maraviroc, take it as soon as you remember. If it almost time for your next dose then don't take a double dose, just skip the dose you've forgotten and carry on.



If you regularly forget to take your treatment, or you aren't taking it for another reason, it's important to talk to your doctor about this.

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## What are the possible side-effects of maraviroc?

All drugs have possible side-effects. It's a good idea to talk to your doctor about possible side-effects before you start taking a drug. If you experience something that might be a side-effect, talk to your doctor about what can be done. A full list of side-effects, including less common side-effects, should be included in the leaflet that comes in the packaging with maraviroc.

We generally divide side-effects into two types:

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

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

The most common side-effects of maraviroc are diarrhoea, nausea, abdominal pain, bloating, flatulence, loss of appetite, headache, difficulty sleeping, depression, rash, weakness, anaemia, raised liver enzyme levels.

Rarely, maraviroc can cause a hypersensitivity (allergic) reaction. If you develop a rash with other symptoms, such as a fever, peeling skin, or breathing problems, contact a doctor. Another type of reaction affects the liver. Symptoms include an itchy rash, yellowing of the eyes, vomiting, dark urine and abdominal pain on the right side. If you develop these symptoms, contact a doctor.

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## Does maraviroc 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.



A list of drugs, known to have interactions with maraviroc, should be included in the leaflet that comes in the packaging with maraviroc. Tell your doctor if you are taking any of these drugs, and other drugs that are not on the list.

If you are taking any of the following drugs, the dose of maraviroc may have to be changed:

- antibiotics (clarithromycin, telithromycin, rifampicin, rifabutin)
- antifungal medicines (ketoconazole, itraconazole, fluconazole)
- anticonvulsant medicines (carbamazepine, phenytoin, phenobarbital)

You should not take St John's wort with maraviroc.

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## Can I take maraviroc in pregnancy?

There are other things which are important to your health and HIV care, and which you and your doctor may take into account when making decisions about your treatment. For example, if you are considering having a baby, or want to start taking contraception.

Maraviroc may be considered as an option for women who want to get pregnant, or who are pregnant, but there is limited information on its use in pregnancy. If you are planning to have a baby or think there is the possibility you might get pregnant, talk to your doctor about which drug combination would be best for you.

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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 to your doctor about them.

For example, if you have a symptom or side-effect or if you are having problems taking your treatment every day, it's important that your doctor knows about this. If you are taking any other medication or recreational drugs, or if you have another medical condition, this is also important for your doctor to know about.

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)

*For detailed information on this drug, visit the **maraviroc** pages in the HIV treatments directory.*

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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.

NAM provides up-to-date and impartial HIV information. Please visit us at our website where you can read the latest HIV news and sign up for free email updates.

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