

Kivexa® tablets, which contain a combination of two drugs, abacavir and lamivudine, are changing. The patent (licence) for the branded version of the medicine called Kivexa® has expired which allows other companies to manufacture abacavir/lamivudine tablets. When these companies make abacavir/lamivudine tablets, their products are called generics. It is common practice within the NHS that when generic versions of a drug become available, these are prescribed instead of the branded version of the drug. These generic drugs are subject to the same rigorous scrutiny by the regulatory system as branded drugs are to ensure that they are as safe and effective.

In the UK there are now generic versions of abacavir/lamivudine tablets available.

From this:



To this, or similar:



Why am I being switched to the generic version of abacavir/lamivudine tablets?

Generic versions of medicines typically cost the NHS significantly less than the branded version. By switching from Kivexa® tablets to the generic version of abacavir/lamivudine tablets you are helping your clinic and the NHS save money, enabling you to receive the same high quality of care whilst we look after a growing number of patients.

What are the main changes I will notice?

The generic abacavir/lamivudine tablets may look slightly different to the Kivexa® brand. They may be a different colour, shape and/or size and may have different markings compared to Kivexa® tablets.

Will the generic abacavir/lamivudine tablets work in the same way as the Kivexa® brand?

Yes. Both versions contain the same active drugs, abacavir and lamivudine, in the same doses (600mg and 300mg respectively). As long as you continue to take the same dose of abacavir/lamivudine i.e. one tablet once a day, then the generic abacavir/lamivudine tablets will work in the same way.

Will there be any side effects when I switch?

You shouldn't expect any new side effects when you start taking the generic abacavir/lamivudine tablets as they contain the same drugs in the same doses. However, the tablets may contain some different inactive ingredients, such as colourings. If you think that you may be allergic/sensitive to any of the ingredients in the generic abacavir/lamivudine tablets, please let your doctor, pharmacist or specialist nurse know before you start to take them. Please also speak to them should you experience any new side effects once you have started the generic abacavir/lamivudine tablets.

How do I switch to the generic abacavir/lamivudine tablets?

The pharmacy dispensing your tablets will do their best to ensure you only receive one version of the tablets instead of a mixed batch of Kivexa® and generic abacavir/lamivudine tablets to avoid any confusion. Once you have used up your current supply of Kivexa® tablets you should switch to the generic abacavir/lamivudine tablets at your next scheduled dose. You should *not* take both the Kivexa® tablets and the generic abacavir/lamivudine tablets together as this would lead to taking a double dose.

How do I take the generic abacavir/lamivudine tablets?

The generic abacavir/lamivudine tablets should be taken in the same way as Kivexa® tablets. They can be taken with or without food and should be taken at the same time of day that you were taking the Kivexa® tablets.

My medication is delivered by home delivery so how does this affect me?

It is likely that either on your next delivery, or the one after, you will receive the generic abacavir/lamivudine tablets.