

Information for people switching from Evotaz[®] to generic atazanavir and ritonavir.



Evotaz[®] is the brand name of the medication you are taking which contains the active drugs atazanavir and cobicistat. You are being asked to switch from Evotaz to two separate generic medicines: atazanavir and ritonavir.

What is a 'generic' drug?

When a drug company makes a new medicine, it is controlled under a patent. It has an approved, or generic name, as well as its own brand name, chosen by the company. For example ibuprofen is the generic name and Nurofen[®] is the brand name. Once the patent runs out, other drug companies can make the drug at a lower cost. These are called 'generic' drugs. The NHS always tries to use generic drugs. This is normal practice for most health conditions. If you are on medications prescribed by your GP for another condition, you may have always been prescribed generic drugs or been switched to generic drugs in the past, as it is standard procedure within the NHS. In the UK there are strict quality controls for both branded and generic versions of medicines. When your medication changes to a generic preparation it is nothing to worry about – the drug is the same and of the same quality, even if the tablet and the packaging look different.

Will atazanavir and ritonavir work the same way as Evotaz?

Yes. Atazanavir and ritonavir should work in the same way as Evotaz as long as both atazanavir and ritonavir are taken together alongside any additional antiretroviral medication you are taking.

What will the new atazanavir and ritonavir look like?

The colour and shape of your atazanavir capsule and ritonavir tablet may change from time to time depending on which generic manufacturer your hospital is using. This is why it is so important to read the packaging and the label to ensure you are always taking one atazanavir capsule and one ritonavir tablet once a day.

Will there be any side effects when I switch?

Atazanavir with ritonavir has a similar side effect profile to Evotaz, but do speak to your clinic doctor, pharmacist or nurse if you experience any new side effects.

How do I take atazanavir and ritonavir?

- As soon as your Evotaz runs out you should then switch to the atazanavir capsule and ritonavir tablet.
- Atazanavir and ritonavir should be swallowed whole with a drink such as water or milk.
- You must take **both** atazanavir and ritonavir **together** at the same time every day alongside any other antiretroviral you may be taking.
- It is recommended to take atazanavir and ritonavir with food to ensure the medication is absorbed and to improve how the medication is tolerated. However this is not critical and it can be taken without food.
- **Interactions with other medicines:** Both Evotaz and atazanavir + ritonavir can interact with other medicines, herbal, complementary or over the counter medicines that you might buy. In particular medicines such as steroids, statins used to treat cholesterol and antidepressants. It is important that you tell the doctor, pharmacist or nurse about any medicines you are taking so that they can check that they are compatible. Make sure you read the patient information leaflet you received with your HIV medicines for a full list.

If you have any questions about atazanavir and ritonavir please contact your clinic doctor, pharmacist or nurse.

Contact:

Telephone number: