RIFAMPICIN

Rifampicin is an antibiotic used to treat bacterial infections

How do I take rifampicin?

- Rifampicin works best when taken on an empty stomach; at least 60 minutes before food or two hours after food.

What do I need to be aware of while I am taking rifampicin?

- Discuss all other medicines you are currently taking (including herbal medicines and over-the-counter medicines) with your doctor and/or pharmacist. This is to check if other medicines are safe with rifampicin.

- Rifampicin reduces the effect of the contraceptive pill. Women who are taking rifampicin should talk to their doctor about which forms of contraception are suitable.

- It is important not to miss doses of rifampicin as this could mean the medication does not work as well.

- Pregnancy: Contact your doctor to discuss if rifampicin is safe for you.

- Breastfeeding: Rifampicin is considered safe in breastfeeding.

This patient antibiotic leaflet is designed to provide information that is easy to understand; it may not contain a complete list of all side effects. Further information is available in the Consumer Medicines Information (CMI). Ask your pharmacist or doctor if you have any additional questions or would like more detailed information about this medicine.

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What are the common side effects of rifampicin?

- Rifampicin may cause your urine, tears, saliva and sweat to turn a red-orange colour. This is harmless and nothing for you to worry about. If you wear soft contact lenses, rifampicin may cause your lenses to become discoloured. If this affects you, speak with your doctor or optometrist. They may advise you to wear glasses instead whilst taking rifampicin.

- Nausea, joint aches and pains (in the first weeks), headache, dizziness, tiredness and weakness may occur- let your doctor know if these bother you.

What are the rare reactions to rifampicin I need to be aware of?

- **Allergic reactions**
  - Such as a rash, itch, blisters or red skin spots – see your doctor immediately.
  - Signs of a serious allergic reaction, such as difficulty breathing or swelling of the face and/or lips or collapse – contact an **ambulance** immediately.

- **Changes in liver function or number of blood cells**
  - Signs of liver problems include loss of appetite, severe nausea or vomiting or yellowing of the eyes or skin.
  - Signs of reduced blood cells include unexplained tiredness, shortness of breath when exercising, dizziness, looking pale, bleeding or bruising.
  - During prolonged treatment (weeks) your doctor may request a blood test to check your liver is working properly.