



## **Itraconazole (Sporonox®) & Voriconazole (Vfend®)**

These are broad spectrum, anti-fungal agents that can be taken orally. They are very expensive approx \$800-\$1100/month). Although both these prescription medications are FDA approved for the treatment of mold or fungal infections, they do not have a specific indication for the treatment of fungal rhinosinusitis. Molds appear to be present in everyone's nasal and sinus passageways but in some individuals, the molds appear to cause disease. The explanation for this is unknown (See What is Rhinosinusitis?). As such, Insurers resist covering them for treatment of rhinosinusitis associated with the presence of molds.

### **Itraconazole**

- Your liver enzymes will be monitored by periodically by blood tests.
- Take your Itraconazole dose at the same time everyday.
- Take your medication after a full meal.
- Antacids can reduce absorption of this medication and if need be they should be taken at least 1 hour before or 2 hours after taking Itraconazole.
- If you are taking stomach medication, make sure you drink cola beverage with the Itraconazole to help it become absorbed.
- Report any signs or symptoms of unusual fatigue, anorexia, nausea and/or vomiting, jaundice (yellowing skin), dark urine, or pale stools.
- Other potential side effects include elevated liver enzymes, gastrointestinal disorders, rash, hypertension, orthostatic hypertension, headache, malaise, myalgia, vasculitis, edema, and vertigo.
- Contact your practitioner BEFORE beginning any new medications while taking Itraconazole.
- Women should use effective measures to PREVENT pregnancy during and up to 2 months after finishing itraconazole.
- Itraconazole should not be taken with a class of cholesterol-lowering drugs known as statins, unless your physicians has specifically told you to do so. Lipitor (atorvastatin) is the most common statin.

**Warnings:** Rare cases of reversible liver toxicity have been reported in patients taking itraconazole. Life-threatening, abnormal heart rhythms and congestive heart failure with death have also been reported in approximately 60 patients after tens of thousands of uses. These risks are aggravated if itraconazole is taken with astemizole, cisapride, pimozone, and/or quinidine.

### **Voriconazole (VFend)**

#### **Directions:**

- Baseline blood work to monitor your liver and kidneys will be ordered. This will be repeated every 1-3 months.
- VFEND Tablets should be taken at least one hour before, or one hour following, a meal.
- Do not drive at night while taking VFEND. VFEND may cause changes to vision, including blurring and/or photophobia (light sensitivity).

This information is not all-inclusive. For more info, please see the PDR. Of course, you may also discuss your questions with your healthcare provider or pharmacist.



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- Avoid potentially hazardous tasks, such as driving or operating machinery if they perceive any change in vision.
- Avoid strong, direct sunlight during VFEND therapy.

**Adverse Reactions:** The most frequently reported adverse events with voriconazole use are visual disturbances, fever, rash, vomiting, nausea, diarrhea, headache, sepsis, edema, abdominal pain, and respiratory disorder. The treatment-related adverse events which most often led to discontinuation of voriconazole were elevated liver function tests, rash, and visual disturbances.

### **Drug interactions for Itraconazole & Voriconazole**

There are a substantial number of drug drug interactions with voriconazole. Drugs, which reduce the effective exposure of voriconazole, include rifampicin, rifabutin (less marked), phenytoin and carbamazepine. Interactions with other drugs that result in increased exposure to those drugs including the antihistamines (terfenadine and astemizole), prednisolone, sirolimus, cyclosporin (half dose), tacrolimus (reduce dose to one third), ergotamine, warfarin, sulphonylureas, statins, midazolam and other benzodiazepines, vincristine and some HIV drugs

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