



Zidovudine

For newborns at risk of HIV infection

If you have HIV, there is a chance that the virus can be passed onto your baby during birth. To help prevent or reduce the risk of this happening, your baby will be given a medicine called zidovudine soon after birth.

Why does your baby need to take zidovudine?

If you have HIV (which stands for *human immunodeficiency virus*), there is a chance that the virus can be passed onto your baby during birth.

Zidovudine is a type of medicine called an *antiretroviral* that can help prevent this from happening.

When will your baby start taking it?

Your baby will start taking zidovudine soon after birth (usually within 4 hours of delivery). They will need to take it for 4 weeks, unless your doctor tells you otherwise.

What sort of medicine is it?

Zidovudine is a pale yellow, strawberry flavoured liquid that you will give to your baby by mouth.

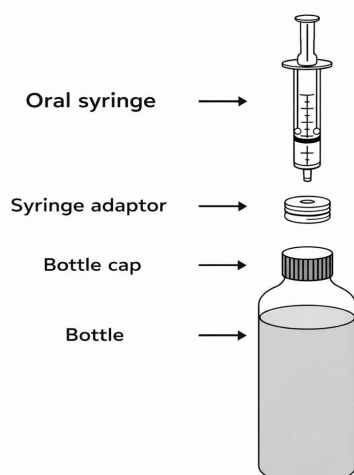
It comes in a bottle with an oral syringe, syringe adaptor and plastic bottle cap.

What dose does your baby need?

Your doctor or pharmacist will let you know what dose to give your baby.

You will need to use the oral syringe to measure out the correct dose. Your baby will usually need 2 doses every 24 hours. You should space these out evenly (e.g. 8 am and 8 pm).

Your baby can take the medicine with a feed or on an empty stomach. If your baby spits out the medicine or vomits a large amount within 15 minutes of having a dose, you will need to give it to them again. You must give the full dose again **within 2 hours** of the vomit.



Patient label here

How do you give it to your baby?

1. Remove the bottle cap.
2. Fit the 3 mL syringe adaptor into the opening of the bottle.
3. Insert the end of the oral syringe into the adaptor.
4. Turn the bottle upside down. Slowly pull back the plunger of the oral syringe until you have the right dose.
5. Turn the bottle back upright and remove the syringe.
6. Squirt small amounts of medicine into the side of your baby's mouth. Allow them to swallow between each squirt.
7. When you have given the full dose, rinse the syringe with water and leave it on a clean surface to dry. You can use the syringe again.

Are there any side effects?

As with all medicines, zidovudine can cause side effects. However, most are minor and do not last long.

You should talk to your doctor if your baby becomes unwell while taking zidovudine.

It is important to look out for signs of an allergic reaction when giving your baby zidovudine.

These include:

- skin rash
- itching or hives
- swollen lips
- wheezing or difficulty breathing.

If you notice any of the above, stop giving zidovudine to your baby. Tell your doctor immediately or go your nearest emergency department.

For more information

If you have any questions or concerns, call the Royal Women's Hospital Medicines Information Line or see your local pharmacist.

Medicines Information Service

The Royal Women's Hospital

Hours: 9am – 4pm (Monday to Friday)

T: (03) 8345 3190

E: drug.information@thewomens.org.au

Pregnancy, Birth & Baby

HIV and pregnancy

<https://www.pregnancybirthbaby.org.au/hiv-and-pregnancy#newborn>

Do you need an interpreter?



Interpreter

You can ask for an interpreter if you need one.

Family Violence Support

1800 Respect National Helpline

You can get help if you have experienced sexual assault, domestic or family violence and abuse.

You can call any time of day or night.

1800 737 732

1800respect.org.au