



London Health Sciences Centre

Multi-Organ Transplant Program

University Hospital
Patient Medication Information
Pharmacy Services 519-663-3172

Brand Name: Rapamune®
Common Names: sirolimus

What is it?

Rapamune® (sirolimus) is an immunosuppressive drug that is used to prevent rejection of transplanted organs. You may be taking other anti-rejection medications along with sirolimus.

How should it be taken?

Sirolimus is usually taken once a day. You should take it at the same time every day. You may take it either with or without food; however, you should be consistent (e.g. always with food or always on an empty stomach).

DO NOT take sirolimus with grapefruit or grapefruit juice. This may cause the amount of sirolimus in your blood to increase. Other juices, including orange juice, have no effect and are safe to drink.

Sirolimus is available as a tablet or a liquid. If you are using the liquid form, your pharmacist will show you how to take it.

Dose changes

Your dose of sirolimus may change often after your transplant. Dose changes are based on the amount of sirolimus in your blood or if you are experiencing any side effects from the medication. The dose will vary among different people. Your transplant doctor will tell you what dose you should take. Take this medication exactly the way you are told by your transplant team.

When you leave the hospital, you will continue to have your sirolimus blood level measured when you come to clinic. On clinic days, bring your sirolimus dose with you, but **DO NOT** take it until **AFTER** you have had your bloodwork taken.

If you miss a dose

Take it as soon as you remember. If it is almost time for the next dose, skip the missed dose and carry on with your usual dose. Do not double the dose to catch up.

If you are sick

If you vomit within ½ hour of taking sirolimus, you should take it again. If you vomit more than ½ hour after taking sirolimus, it is not necessary to take another dose. If you have diarrhea for several days or continue to vomit, you should contact your transplant team.

What are the side effects?

Sirolimus can cause nausea, diarrhea, tremors, dizziness, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and triglycerides, unusual heartbeat, infections, acne, excess hair growth, anemia, unusual bleeding or bruising, certain types of cancers (e.g. skin cancer) or mouth sores. You should rinse your mouth with water several times after taking sirolimus as they may help prevent mouth sores.

Report any signs of infection such as fevers, chills, sore throat, white patches in your mouth or other mouth sores, or changes in vaginal discharge to you transplant team. Also, report any unusual lumps or swollen glands, swelling, night sweats or unexpected weight loss.

Women taking sirolimus should talk to their transplant team before becoming pregnant as sirolimus may be harmful to the unborn baby.

Drug interactions

Several medications do not mix well with sirolimus, and they can affect the level of sirolimus in your blood. You should avoid these medications unless your transplant team tells you it is okay.

May increase sirolimus	May decrease sirolimus
-diltiazem -verapamil -fluconazole/ ketoconazole/ itraconazole -erythromycin/ clarithromycin (azithromycin is safe) -cimetidine -grapefruit/ grapefruit juice	-phenytoin -phenobarbital -carbamazepine -rifampin

Drugs that are used to treat high cholesterol and triglycerides may become more potent when taken with sirolimus. You should always check with your transplant team before taking these types of medications (e.g., atorvastatin, simvastatin, pravastatin, lovastatin, rosuvastatin, fenofibrate, etc.).

You should also check with your transplant team before having any vaccinations. Do not use herbal medications while taking any anti-rejection drugs. You should also avoid using non-prescription, over-the-counter medications.

Other information

Store your medication at room temperature, away from excessive heat and humidity. Sirolimus is a very specialized drug and may not be readily available at every pharmacy. Be sure you always have enough on hand so you never run out.