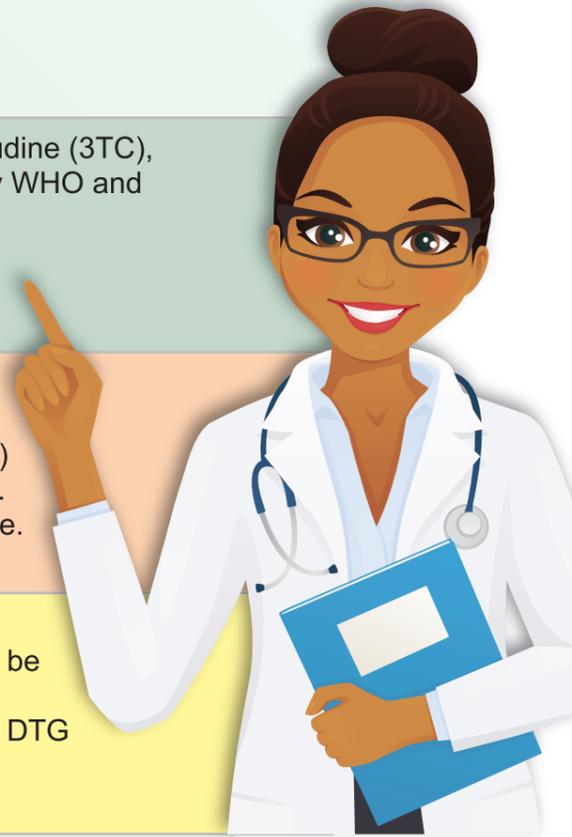




Provider Counselling Guide for Women of Reproductive Potential Initiating a Dolutegravir-Based Regimen (TLD)

1 Counsel on risks and benefits of DTG

Introduction of drug	TLD is a pill that contains three antiretroviral (ARV) drugs: Tenofovir (TDF), Lamivudine (3TC), and Dolutegravir (DTG). Dolutegravir is a new ARV which is now recommended by WHO and used globally. Every drug has benefits and risks, however, the consideration is always that the benefits must outweigh the risks before a drug is released for public use. Similarly, with DTG the benefits outweigh the risks.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faster viral suppression within the first 3 months (A person on DTG reaches viral suppression faster) • High genetic barrier to resistance (It is not easy for HIV to become resistant to DTG) • Fewer drug-to-drug interactions (no family planning restrictions, unlike efavirenz). • Fixed dose combination (FDC)/single dose, smaller tablet, well tolerated/palatable. • Fewer and milder side effects compared to other ARVs
Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DTG may increase the risk of neural tube defects (NTDs) if taken during the first 6 weeks of pregnancy, with the chance of her baby developing NTD estimated to be 3 in 1000 (0.3%) whereas on efavirenz it is 1 in 1000 (0.1%). • Weight gain – some patients have gained weight (~3-5 kg in body weight) while on DTG • Insomnia – some patients have had difficulty falling asleep while on DTG. <p>It is advisable to take TLD in the morning to reduce sleep problems</p>



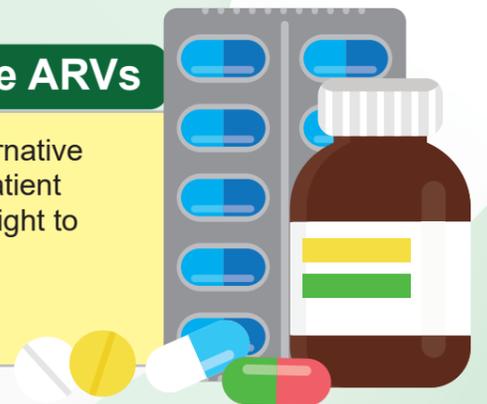
2 Pharmacovigilance

As TLD is a new drug, advise the patient to report any side effect she may experience during her clinical visits. If the side effects are serious, advise the patient not to wait for her next scheduled clinic appointment but to present to the clinic immediately.



3 Inform on alternative ARVs

Give information on available alternative ARV regimens. Ensure that the patient understands and is aware of her right to choose.



4 Use of DTG is voluntary

Before prescribing DTG, ensure that

- The patient has voluntarily opted to use DTG as one of the drugs for their HIV treatment.
- The patient is fully aware of the benefits and risks of DTG.
- Document that the patient has made an informed choice.



5 Family planning counselling

- Counsel the patient about available family planning methods, the benefits and importance of being on family planning method while on TLD.
- Give the patient an opportunity to freely choose an option that is responsive to her preferences and needs. It is recommended the patient be on a reliable contraceptive method.
- Always discuss dual contraception and offer condoms.
- Encourage the patient to report any changes in family planning method and reproductive goals.
- Advise that if the patient is planning a pregnancy she should discuss with her clinician before stopping contraception.
- Remind the patient that if she becomes pregnant while taking TLD, it is important that she does not stop taking her medication; but report to the clinic to discuss this with her clinician



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