

National Department of Health, South Africa



Lopinavir/Ritonavir 40mg/10mg Oral Pellets Fact Sheet

Information for healthcare workers and caregivers

February 2021



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Introducing Lopinavir/ritonavir (LPV/r) Oral Pellets 40mg/10mg: a product that is just as effective as the syrup and tablet, but in an alternative formulation

WHY ARE LPV/r ORAL PELLETS BEING INTRODUCED?:

For children on first line ARV regimens who cannot swallow tablets, the **LPV/r syrup** is the **only protease-inhibitor option**. Protease inhibitors, like lopinavir/ritonavir and atazanavir, combat HIV replication by blocking the HIV protease enzyme, thus preventing immature HIV cells from maturing and infecting CD4 cells. The **unpleasant taste** of the syrup leads to administration issues, and subsequent **pitfalls** in **retention in care** and **viral suppression**. The **improved tasting oral pellets** aim to address these issues.



INDICATIONS FOR LPV/r ORAL PELLETS:

In combination with other antiretrovirals, for the treatment of HIV in children **> 6 months old** who are **not tolerating LPV/r oral solution**.

NB: Patients who can swallow tablets whole can take LPV/r (100/25mg or 200/50mg) tablets.

NOTE: LPV/r oral pellets can be prescribed by a doctor or a professional nurse.



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Advantages of LPV/r oral pellets

LPV/r pellets were developed as an *alternative* for LPV/r syrups and tablets in young children because:



- ✓ The pellets are taste-masked to reduce the bitter taste.
- ✓ The pellets do not require cold storage in the refrigerator. They can be stored at room temperature.
- ✓ The pellets are easy to swallow.
- ✓ The pellets do not contain any harmful additives.



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Eligibility for LPV/r oral pellets

It's important to assess the following criteria in children for *eligibility* for oral pellets:

- ✓ Is at least 6 months old
- ✓ Can swallow soft foods
- ✓ Cannot tolerate oral syrups
- ✓ Cannot swallow whole tablets



If the child fulfils ALL the above criteria, then they are eligible for LPV/r oral pellets



If the child DOES NOT fulfil all the above criteria, they will be eligible for the LPV/r oral syrup, or the LPV/r oral tablets



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Demonstration on the use of LPV/r oral pellets

As this is a new product, it is **mandatory** that the healthcare workers carefully **explain** and **demonstrate** to caregivers how to open and administer oral pellets.

Adequate instructions must be provided to the caregiver to ensure:

- ✓ the correct number of capsules is given
- ✓ the entire dose is administered as required

Infants should be carefully observed by caregivers for **signs of aspiration** which may include:

- Coughing
- Choking
- Gagging
- Eye reddening

NOTE: Healthcare workers must **ask the caregiver about how they give the pellets** when they come back for follow up visits to ensure that administration is as per the guidelines, and to ensure that the child is getting the correct, therapeutic dose of the pellets

Video demonstration on the use of LPV/r oral pellets

To watch a video on how to give oral pellets, click [here](#), or on YouTube, search for:

Instructional Video: How to Administer Lopinavir/Ritonavir Pellets to Children with HIV [Updated]



Instructional Video: How to Administer Lopinavir/Ritonavir Pellets to Children wi



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Showing results for *instructional* Video: How to Administer Lopinavir/Ritonavir Pellets to Children with HIV [Updated] Search instead for nstructional Video: How to Administer Lopinavir/Ritonavir Pellets to Children with HIV [Updated]



Instructional Video: How to Administer Lopinavir/Ritonavir Pellets to HIV-Infected Children

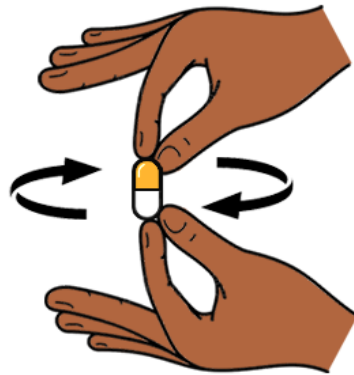
Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiative • 6.3K views • 3 years ago

PLEASE WATCH UPDATED VERSION: <https://youtu.be/OImGP2SUUnc> This is an instructional video that offers direction to ...

How to open LPV/r oral pellets

Oral pellets come in capsules and there are 120 capsules per bottle. The pellets inside the capsule are white in colour.

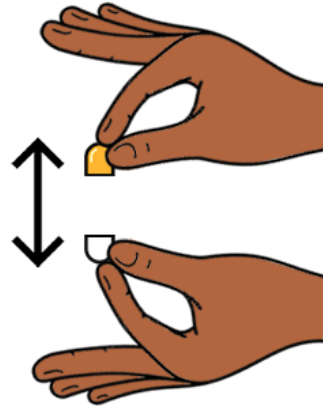
1



TWIST

Hold the capsule with the yellow side up, and twist until it is loose.

2



LIFT

Lift the yellow half of the capsule.

3



POUR

Pour all the pellets into a teaspoon.

NOTE: the capsule must **never be swallowed whole**. Throw the capsule casing away after the pellets have been emptied from it



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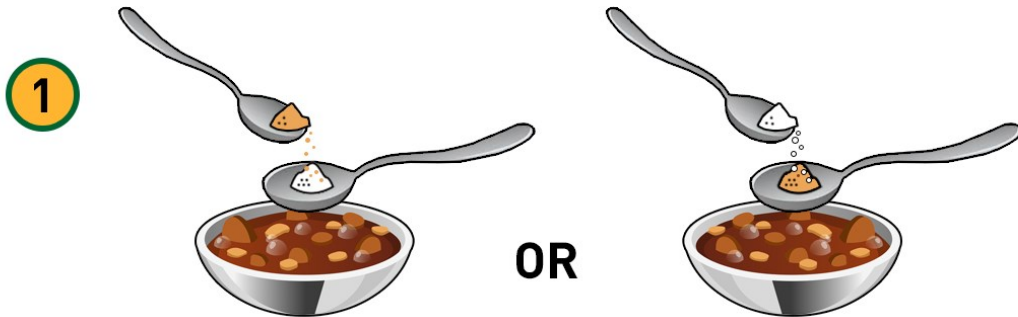
How to administer LPV/r oral pellets with soft food

Oral pellets **CANNOT** be stirred, dissolved or crushed in soft foods prior to administration. The pellets **must not be chewed** as they will develop a bad taste.

STEP 1: PREPARE FOOD TO GIVE WITH PELLETS

1. Sprinkle pellets onto a **teaspoon**, then pour food over pellets

2. Pour food onto a **teaspoon**, then sprinkle pellets over food



Do not stir the pellets with the food, make sure you can still see them

STEP 2: FEED THE MIXTURE TO THE CHILD

2



Feed the mixture immediately to the child. Do not let the pellets dissolve in the food. The pellets must not be chewed

Feed the rest of the food to the child or give him/her water to make sure the pellets have all been swallowed

TIP: give pellets with food that the child prefers to take & will swallow without chewing (e.g. porridge, yoghurt, mashed potato)

TIP: The child must try to finish all the pellets. If the child cannot finish the food with the pellets, **do not store it for later use**

How often to administer LPV/r oral pellets

Oral pellets must be given **twice a day**, once in the **morning** and once at **night**.

PELLETS SHOULD BE GIVEN **TWICE A DAY**
(approximately every 12 hours)

FOR EXAMPLE



1. **Decide two times that you will give the pellets to your child.**
2. **There should be approximately 12 hours in between the two times.**

MAKE SURE THAT THE CHILD TAKES **ALL THE PELLETS**



TIP: Keep **reminders** for when to give oral pellets to your child. Use a calendar or an alarm on your phone



TIP: Give **1 or 2 capsules of pellets at a time** otherwise the amount of pellets may be too much for child to swallow at once

How many LPV/r oral pellets to give the child according to their weight

The nurse or doctor at the clinic will always tell you how many capsules of pellets to give your child
 The **number of capsules of pellets** that the child takes **will increase as the child grows and gains weight**

CHILD'S WEIGHT IN KG	NUMBER OF CAPSULES OF ORAL PELLETS TO GIVE		NOTE
	MORNING	EVENING	
3 – 4.9	2	2	n/a
5 – 5.9	2	2	
6 – 9.9	3	3	
10 – 13.9	4	4	As soon as a child is developmentally able to swallow tablets , and is at least 10kg, they should switch to LPV/r 100/25mg tablets as it will significantly ease pill burden
14 – 19.9	5	5	
20 - 24.9	6	6	
25 – 29.9	7	7	
30-34.9	10	10	
≥ 35kg	10	10	

Adverse effects of LPV/r oral pellets

LPV/r oral pellets are **safe**, but **mild adverse events / side-effects can occur** after administering the treatment. It's important to observe infants and young children periodically for any adverse events, and to report them to your healthcare facility

POSSIBLE ADVERSE REACTIONS:

- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Abdominal pain
- Yellowing of the eyes and skin
- Dark coloured urine
- Light coloured bowel movements
- Loss of appetite
- Itchy skin



**REPORT ANY OF THESE
SYMPTOMS TO YOUR
NEAREST HEALTH FACILITY**

For further assistance on how and when to use this formulation please contact the following:

National HIV and TB Care Worker Hotline: 0800 212 506 or 021 406 6782

National HIV and TB Care Worker Hotline: 071 840 157

- This helpline can be contacted via SMS / Please Call Me / WhatsApp

Right To Care Paediatric and Adolescent HIV Helpline: 082 352 6642

Right To Care Adult HIV Helpline: 082 957 6698

- These helplines can be contacted via SMS / Please Call Me / WhatsApp

KZN Paediatric Hotline: 0800 006 603

Weight based dosing for all other paediatric formulations are available on [KnowledgeHub](#) in the 2019 ART Clinical Guidelines for the Management of HIV in Adults, Pregnancy, Adolescents, Children, Infants and Neonates, October 2019



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