

## **WHO-PQ recommended clinical and preclinical information for the patient**

*This information reflects the recommendations of current WHO guidelines and the scope of WHO's prequalification programme.*

**Information for the patient****Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules\***  
Rifampicin

*Carers or parents looking after the person who takes this medicine should use this information to give the medicine correctly and take note of the warnings and side effects*

**1. What Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules is and what it is used for**

Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules is a medicine containing the active ingredient rifampicin. Rifampicin belongs to a group of medicines called rifamycin antibiotics.

Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules is used in combination with other tuberculosis medicines for the treatment of tuberculosis (TB), an infection caused by bacteria called *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. It may also be given to you on its own, or with other medicines for preventing TB, if you are at high risk of infection.

Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules is also used in combination with other medicines to treat leprosy, a condition caused by bacteria called *Mycobacterium leprae*. If you have been in contact with someone with leprosy, you may be given a dose of Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules on its own to reduce the risk of getting the disease.

**2. What you need to know before you take Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules****Do not take Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules if you:**

- are allergic (hypersensitive) to rifampicin or the related medicines rifabutin or rifapentin, or to any of the other ingredients of Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules (see section 6, What Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules contains).
- have jaundice, acute liver disease, or severely reduced liver function
- have had liver damage linked to rifampicin before, or severe side effects such as bleeding and purplish rash due to loss of blood platelets, haemolytic anaemia (damage to red blood cells), shortness of breath, lung damage, steep falls in blood pressure, kidney failure, or severe skin reactions
- are using certain medicines (see ‘Other medicines and Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules’ below).

**Warnings and precautions**

Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules may cause liver disease (hepatitis). Your health care provider will check your liver function before starting treatment and regularly while you are receiving treatment.

You should be attentive to symptoms that might be due to liver damage, such as unexplained loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, dark urine, yellow discoloration of the skin and eyes (jaundice), persistent tiredness and weakness for more than 3 days and abdominal pain and tenderness. If these occur, you should immediately report this to your health care provider.

You may be at special risk for developing hepatitis

- if you are older than 35 years,
- if you drink alcoholic beverages daily (see “Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules with food and drink”)
- if you already have reduced liver function or long-term liver disease
- if you are a user of injection drugs (e. g. heroin)

If you belong to one of these groups your health care provider will closely check your liver function. You may also get additional checks:

- if you are regularly taking other medicines (see “Other medicines and Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules”),

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\* Trade names are not prequalified by WHO. This is the national medicines regulatory agency’s responsibility.

- if you are pregnant
- if you are living with HIV.

Your health care provider will need to carry out blood tests before starting treatment with Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules and at times during treatment.

If you get flu-like symptoms such as fever, headache, muscle aches etc., you should report this to your health care provider, since Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules may be the cause. You should also tell your health care provider if your TB symptoms start to get worse again. Inform them immediately if you experience sudden worsening of shortness of breath, maybe with a dry cough or fever which does not respond to antibiotics.

If you have kidney problems, diabetes or porphyria, it is important that you inform your health care provider about this, since your health care provider may need to carry out extra checks or adjust your medicines.

If you are taking cortisone or any cortisone-like medicine, you should report this to your health care provider, since the cortisone dose may have to be increased while taking Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules.

Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules may cause a reddish orange colour of body fluids such as urine, sputum and tears. This is due to rifampicin, and does not require medical attention. Also, soft contact lenses may become permanently stained due to Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules.

Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules may lower the effects of oral contraceptive pills. Therefore a different or additional method of contraception (e.g. condoms, intra-uterine device, pessary) should be used during treatment with Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules. If you use contraception, discuss it with your health care provider.

It is important that your health care provider knows about all your signs of illness, even when you think they are not related to tuberculosis infection.

### **Other medicines and Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules**

Tell your health care provider if you are taking or have recently taken any other medicines, including medicines obtained without a prescription. These may affect the action of Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules, or Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules may affect their action. Side effects of either medicine may become worse or the medicines may become less effective. **It is important that you tell your health care provider about all your medicines, as some medicines should not be taken with Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules, and other medicines may need their doses to be changed.**

You should not take Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules with:

- voriconazole (a medicine used to treat fungal infections).
- HIV protease inhibitors (medicines used to treat HIV infection).
- direct acting antivirals for the treatment of chronic Hepatitis C (daclatasvir, ledipasvir, sofosbuvir, velpatasvir).

The active agent in Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules may also affect or be affected by a great number of other medicines, including for instance:

- medicines used to treat HIV infection (e.g. efavirenz, nevirapine, etravirine, rilpivirine, dolutegravir, raltegravir, maraviroc)
- medicines used to treat fungal infections (e.g. ketoconazole, fluconazole, itraconazole)
- antibiotics (e.g. clarithromycin, chloramphenicol, doxycycline)
- medicines used to treat malaria (e.g. amodiaquine, artemisinin, atovaquone, chloroquine, lumefantrine, mefloquine, quinine)
- immunosuppressant medicines (e.g. cyclosporine, tacrolimus)
- medicines used to treat heart conditions (e.g. verapamil, digoxin)
- medicines used to lower cholesterol (e.g. atorvastatin, simvastatin)
- some medicines used to treat diabetes (e.g. glibenclamide)
- oral contraceptive pills
- medicines used to treat epileptic seizures (e.g. phenytoin, carbamazepine, valproate)

- medicines used to help you sleep (benzodiazepines, e.g. diazepam, flurazepam, triazolam, midazolam)
- medicines used for the treatment of certain psychiatric conditions (neuroleptics, e.g. chlorpromazine, haloperidol, and some medicines for depression such as amitriptyline)
- medicines used for prevention of blood clots (e.g. warfarin)
- medicines used at surgery (e.g. halothane)
- corticosteroids (medicines for the treatment of inflammations and other diseases, such as asthma or rheumatoid arthritis, e.g. prednisolone,)
- medicines used to treat pain (e.g. morphine, paracetamol)
- codeine (medicine to treat cough)
- disulfiram (medicine used for the treatment of chronic alcoholism)
- antacids (used for indigestion and acid stomach)
- herbal medicines

Taking any of these medicines together with Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules may be unsuitable or require dose adjustment. Talk to your health care provider for advice on your medicines.

### **Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules with food and drink**

Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules should be taken on an empty stomach (at least one hour prior to or two hours after a meal).

You should not drink alcohol while taking Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules. This increases the risk of liver damage.

### **Pregnancy and breast-feeding**

If you become pregnant, or are planning to become pregnant, tell your health care provider so you can discuss any concerns. Tuberculosis can be particularly dangerous in pregnancy and should be managed with effective treatment. Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules does not pose additional risks to you or your baby.

Rifampicin can pass into breast milk and may affect its colour. No negative effects have been reported in breast-fed-infants whose mothers were given this medicine, and you may breast-feed during treatment with Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules. However, the amount of the medicine in breast milk is very low and is not enough to protect or treat your child.

### **Driving and using machines**

This medicine contains rifampicin, which may have an effect on you. More information can be found in the product information as approved by the reference authority, stated in WHOPAR part 1.

## **3. How to take Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules**

Your health care provider will work out the right dose of Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules for you, based on your age, weight and condition.

For the **treatment** of TB and leprosy, Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules must be used with other medicines. If you are taking Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules to **prevent** TB or leprosy, then it may be used on its own or with other medicines – your health care provider will explain which.

**Always take your medicine exactly as your health care provider has told you.** You should check with your health care provider if you are not sure.

Do not change the dose unless your health care provider tells you to. Your treatment may need to go on for many months, but it is important to take the full course of treatment recommended by your health care provider, even if you feel better.

### **Treatment and prevention of tuberculosis**

The dose of Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules is decided based on your age and body weight and is taken once a day. The usual doses are shown below:

*Patients 10 years of age and older*

Body weight	Number of capsules
25 to less than 30 kg	1 capsule daily
35 kg and over	2 capsules daily

If you weigh 30 to less than 35 kg your health care provider will recommend a different medicine in order to supply you with a suitable dose.

*Patients under 10 years of age*

Body weight	Number of capsules
15 to less than 25 kg	1 capsule daily
25 kg and over	<i>As for adults, above</i>

For children weighing less than 15 kg or who cannot swallow capsules whole, a different medicine will be used, as Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsule is not suitable.

Your health care provider will tell you how long you need to continue taking the medicine and which other medicines to take with it.

**Treatment of leprosy**

For the treatment of leprosy, Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules only need to be taken once a month. The recommended dose in adults is 2 capsules of Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules taken once a month. Your health care provider will tell you how long you need to continue taking the medicine and which other medicines to take with it.

Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules may not be suitable for the treatment of leprosy in children; your health care provider will work out a suitable alternative product and dose.

**Prevention of leprosy**

For the prevention of leprosy, Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules only needs to be taken once.

In adults and adolescents the recommended dose depends on age and weight as follows:

Age and weight	Number of capsules
15 years and over	2 capsules
10-14 years	<i>Your health care provider will work out a suitable alternative product and dose</i>
Younger children weighing at least 20 kg	1 capsule

**How to take Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules**

Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules should be swallowed with water or another drink.

The capsules should be taken on an empty stomach (at least one hour prior to or two hours after a meal). Try to take Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules at the same time each day.

**If you take more Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules than you should**

If you accidentally take too many capsules, immediately contact your health care provider or the nearest hospital emergency department. Take the capsule container with you so that you can easily describe what you have taken.

If you have taken too much Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules, you may feel or be sick (vomiting), and get other side effects like itching, pain in your belly, headache, and becoming unresponsive or unconscious. You may also get a reddish-orange discolouration of the skin and body fluids, facial swelling, seizures, low blood pressure and effects on your heart.

**If you forget to take Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules**

It is important not to miss a dose. If you miss or forget to take a dose, the missed dose should be taken as soon as possible, unless it is less than 6 hours till your next dose, in which case skip the missed dose and just take the next regular dose.

Do not take a double dose to make up for a forgotten capsule.

If you vomit less than 1 hour after taking this medicine, take another dose. You do not need to take another dose if you were sick more than 1 hour after taking Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules.

**If you stop taking Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules**

Do not stop taking this medicine without checking with your health care provider. Stopping your capsules too early may no longer protect you from the infection or cause it to come back.

**4. Possible side effects**

Like all medicines, Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules can cause side effects, although not everybody gets them. When treating tuberculosis, it is not always possible to tell if a side effect is caused by Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules or by any other medicines you may be taking at the same time. For this reason, it is important that you inform your health care provider of any change in your health.

The most important adverse effects of rifampicin are liver problems and skin reactions, which in some cases can be severe and life-threatening.

If you get symptoms of liver problems, **tell your health care provider right away**. These include feeling or being sick (nausea or vomiting), feeling tired or weak for 3 or more days in a row, dark coloured urine or pale faeces, yellowing of the whites of your eyes or skin, itching, rash, or upper stomach pain.

You should **also tell your health care provider right away** if you get severe rashes or blistering, ulcers in your mouth, throat, genitals or eyes, fever and flu-like symptoms, bleeding or unusual bruising, severe headache, new or worsening shortness of breath or cough, blood in your urine or changes in how much urine you make.

You may need to stop taking Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules and go to hospital if severe side effects happen.

The following side effects have been reported in patients treated with Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules

**Very common side effects**

*(may affect more than 1 in 10 people):*

- fever
- chills

**Common side effects**

*(may affect up to 1 in 10 people):*

- yellow, brown, orange or reddish discoloration of body fluids such as urine, sputum, tears, saliva and sweat.
- loss of appetite,
- feeling sick (nausea)

- vomiting
- increased liver enzymes and levels of a substance called bilirubin, as measured in blood samples (see above, "Take special care with Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules"). Usually, liver enzyme increases occur during the first 1-3 months of therapy and return to normal despite continued treatment. When the values rise above a certain level, your health care provider may decide to stop treatment with Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules.
- appearance of new TB symptoms despite continuing to take the medicine correctly
- headache
- dizziness
- tiredness
- drowsiness
- reddening of the eyes
- flushing
- itching (with or without rash)
- nettle rash

**Uncommon side effects**

*(may affect up to 1 in 100 people)*

- short-term changes in the white blood cell counts (leucopenia)
- damage to red blood cells, possibly leading to fatigue, weakness and shortness of breath
- diarrhoea

**Rare side effects**

*(may affect up to 1 in 1000 people)*

- problems with coordination, balance and speech (ataxia)
- disturbances of vision
- pus and inflammation of the eye (exudative conjunctivitis)
- disturbances of the menstrual cycle sometimes with loss of all periods (amenorrhoea).

**Side effects of which it is not known how often they may occur**

- severe bowel infection with watery diarrhoea (pseudomembranous colitis)
- painful rash with reddish purple spots (thrombocytopenic purpura)
- low levels of blood platelets leading to unusual bruising or bleeding (thrombocytopenia)
- tiny clots inside the blood vessels (disseminated intravascular coagulation)
- severe allergic reactions (anaphylaxis)
- reduced function of the adrenal glands affecting the body's ability to respond to stress
- worsening of symptoms in patients with existing reduced adrenal gland function
- changes in personality and abnormal thoughts (psychotic disorder)
- confusion
- bleeding inside the brain (cerebral haemorrhage)
- drastic fall in blood pressure with cold, clammy skin (shock)
- inflammation of blood vessels (vasculitis)
- breathlessness (dyspnoea)
- wheezing
- inflammation of the lungs (interstitial lung disease)
- stomach pain or discomfort
- damage to the stomach lining (erosive gastritis)
- painful inflammation of the pancreas (pancreatitis)
- tooth discoloration (may be permanent)
- liver damage and inflammation (hepatitis)
- high blood levels of bilirubin
- severe skin reactions with fever or flu-like symptoms, blisters and ulcers in mouth, throat, genitals or eyes
- muscle weakness or damage (myopathy)
- bone pain
- kidney damage (may lead to difficulty in passing urine)

- increased levels of waste product (creatinine) in blood tests, a sign of kidney problems
- excess bleeding of mother or baby after giving birth
- worsening of porphyria
- swelling due to fluid in limbs or face (oedema)
- low blood pressure

**Reporting of side effects**

If you get a side effect, talk to your health care provider. This includes side effects not listed in this leaflet. You may also be able to report such effects directly to your national reporting system if one is available. By reporting side effects, you can help to improve the available information on this medicine.

**5. How to store Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules**

Product specific information on the storage conditions is shown in the product information as approved by the reference authority, stated in WHOPAR part 1.

**6. Contents of the pack and other information****What Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules contains****What Rifampicin 300 mg hard capsules looks like and contents of the pack****Supplier and Manufacturer****This leaflet was last revised in May 2026**

Product specific information on the composition, visual appearance of the formulation, appearance and size of packs as well as on the supplier, is shown in the product information as approved by the reference authority, stated in WHOPAR part 1.