

physically sick) your medication may not be absorbed properly into your body. If you are vomiting or have a bad upset stomach please make sure you let your TB Nurse or doctor know as soon as you can.

- ⦿ Skin rashes or itching may occur, but they usually go of their own accord. Very rarely the skin, and possibly the lips and inside of the mouth, may become red and start peeling. If you notice this, please stop taking your TB tablets and contact your doctor or nurse at once.

## Combination drugs

### Voractiv

Voractiv is a combination of four TB drugs (Rifampicin, Isoniazid, Pyrazinamide, Ethambutol) in one tablet.

### Rifater

Rifater is a combination of three TB drugs (Rifampicin, Isoniazid and Pyrazinamide) in one tablet.

### Rifinah

Rifinah is a combination of two TB drugs (Rifampicin and Isoniazid) in one tablet.

## Where can I go for support?

If you are affected by TB, there is help available so you don't feel alone.

Your TB Nurse is there to support you through your TB treatment. Make sure you attend all your appointments and let the healthcare professionals know if you are having any trouble taking your tablets.

You may find it beneficial to speak to someone else who has also had TB and is now better. TB Alert, the UK's national tuberculosis charity, can put you in touch with a member of the **TB Action Group (TBAG)** who will be happy to chat with you and help you through your treatment.

For more information on tuberculosis and its treatment, ask clinic staff if they can give you another TB Alert leaflet called Tuberculosis (TB) Treatment.

**Remember:** Your TB Nurse is there to help and advise you throughout your treatment. Please contact your TB Nurse if you feel unwell on your treatment or if there is anything you are unsure of regarding your TB drugs.

Your TB Nurse is:

Your Hospital Doctor is:

Telephone:

Email:



TB Alert, Community Base, 113 Queens Road,  
Brighton, BN1 3XG  
Tel: 01273 234029 [www.tbalert.org](http://www.tbalert.org)

For more information about TB and to read about real people's experience of the illness, please visit *The Truth About TB* at [www.thetruthabouttb.org](http://www.thetruthabouttb.org)

If you have an enquiry about TB, or would like to find out more about the TB Action Group (TBAG) – a patient support and advocacy network – please call 01273 234770.

**TB Alert** is the UK's national tuberculosis charity. Our projects are in the UK, India and Africa, and we also work with international partners to tackle TB as a global issue. Our activities focus on three main areas:

- ⦿ Raising public and professional awareness about TB, and providing support to patients during their treatment
- ⦿ Bringing together statutory health services, voluntary organisations and people affected by TB to plan and deliver better TB services
- ⦿ Developing policy and advocating for the resources to improve the care of patients and the prevention and control of TB

This work supports our organisational mission of increasing access to effective treatment for all people affected by TB.

Any information in this leaflet regarding the diagnosis and treatment of tuberculosis is intended to give general information on the subject only. It is not intended as a substitute for the knowledge, expertise, skill and judgement of physicians, pharmacists or other healthcare professionals in patient care. None of the information contained in this leaflet is intended to be used for decisions on diagnosis or treatment. Questions and concerns regarding diagnosis and treatment should be directed to a healthcare professional.



# About Your Tuberculosis (TB) Drugs

**If you or a loved one has been diagnosed with tuberculosis (TB), do not worry. TB is curable.**

The only way to guarantee that you will get better from TB is to take specific drugs and to keep taking these until your doctor tells you to stop. This will take at least six months, but then you will know you are free from TB.

TB drugs can sometimes cause side effects, like any other medicine. This leaflet is designed to tell you more about the drugs that are used to treat TB.

### Before you start taking your TB drugs

Tell your doctor about:

- ⦿ All other medicines that you are taking including any that you buy over the counter in a community pharmacy
- ⦿ Any previous allergy to any other medicines
- ⦿ If you have ever had any liver disease
- ⦿ If you have ever had any other serious illness

TB treatment can be taken safely during pregnancy. However it is important to let your doctor know whether you are pregnant, think you may be pregnant or are breastfeeding as they may want to amend the drugs they prescribe for you accordingly.

### When should I take my TB tablets?

Your doctor or nurse will discuss with you the most suitable time of day for you to take your TB tablets, but here is a helpful guideline:

	Rifampicin 	Isoniazid 	Pyrazinamide 	Ethambutol 400mg 100mg 	Voractiv 	Rifater 	Rifinah 150mg 300mg 
Best absorbed if the stomach is empty – take at least <b>one hour before</b> you eat food or <b>two hours afterwards</b>	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Can be taken with or without food			✓	✓			

### Most commonly experienced side effects

Stomach upset such as nausea (feeling sick), vomiting and diarrhoea	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Flu-like symptoms such as chills, fever, dizziness and joint pain	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
Skin rashes and itchiness	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Menstrual disturbances	✓				✓	✓	✓
Pins and needles in the fingers or toes		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Body secretions (urine, saliva, semen, vaginal fluids) may turn orangey red	✓				✓	✓	✓
Effectiveness of hormonal contraceptives (oral pill, implants or other) is reduced*	✓				✓	✓	✓

\*Women should use additional means of contraception when they are taking these TB drugs. Ask your doctor or nurse for advice.

### Important side effects

- ⦿ Voractiv, Rifater, Pyrazinamide and Isoniazid may rarely cause jaundice (yellowing of the skin or eyes). **If you notice this, please stop taking your TB tablets and seek medical attention immediately.** Your doctor or nurse will arrange for you to have a liver function test prior to starting these TB drugs and you will be monitored while you are on treatment.
- ⦿ Voractiv, Ethambutol and Isoniazid may rarely cause reversible visual disturbances (blurred and red/green colour disturbance). **If you notice this, please stop taking your TB tablets and inform your doctor or nurse immediately.** Your doctor or nurse will arrange for you to have an eye test prior to starting these TB drugs.
- ⦿ Nausea (feeling sick) is a common side effect to most TB drugs. However, if you are actually vomiting (being