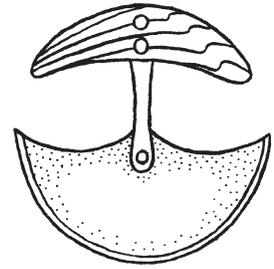


Information for Inuit Community Members

Fact Sheet 3 HIV/AIDS -Related Illnesses



SUSTIVA

What is Sustiva?

Sustiva is one medicine that is part of a large family of drugs usually called Non-nucleosides or non-nukes. It is a medicine that fights the disease called HIV. It is usually taken with other medications that form the AIDS cocktail.

What does Sustiva do?

It helps keep the amount of HIV in your blood as low as possible. By keeping the amount of HIV in your blood low you have a stronger immune system and you are better able to fight common infections.

Does Sustiva have side effects?

Most medicines have side effects. HIV is a strong virus that requires powerful medicine to fight it. As a result the side effects to medicines like Sustiva can be hard to get used to.

Not everyone who takes Sustiva gets side effects. Some people, however, have a hard time and have side effects that make them want to stop taking it. It is important to understand that even if you are having side effects you should never stop taking medicine without first talking to your doctor. Stopping Sustiva or any other medicine that your doctor has given you without talking to your doctor first can be risky.

It is common for about half of all people who take Sustiva to have some of the following side effects. They usually only last about a month and then start to go away.

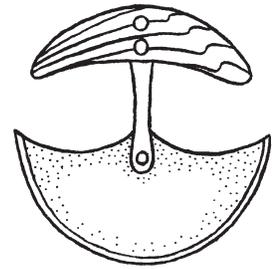
- ◆ Feeling dizzy
- ◆ Feeling sleepy all the time
- ◆ Feeling sad for no reason
- ◆ Feeling more worried about things than usual
- ◆ Finding it harder to think clearly
- ◆ Having problems getting to sleep
- ◆ Having scary or very strange dreams

Some people who take Sustiva see or hear things that are not really there when they are awake. This sort of experience is what is usually called having hallucinations. It is important to do two things when you start taking Sustiva in case you have hallucinations. Tell a family member or close friend that you are taking a new medication that can cause you to imagine things. Tell them it is important to take you to the doctor or health center if you start to behave strangely. It is also important that you report any hallucinations that you have to your doctor or nurse so they can help you deal with them.



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Some people who take Sustiva get a rash or find their skin feels itchy. You are likely to notice the rash about two weeks after you start taking the medicine. Most people find that the rash only lasts a couple of weeks while your body gets used to taking Sustiva.

It is very important to report all of your side effects to your doctor when taking Sustiva. One of the things you may find helpful is to keep a written record of your side effects from the day you start taking Sustiva. Give the list to your doctor so you do not forget to mention anything.

Common Questions people ask about Sustiva:

Q: *Can I take Sustiva if I am pregnant?*

A: No. Sustiva is not recommended for women who are pregnant because it can hurt the baby. If you are pregnant, are planning to get pregnant or could possibly become pregnant and you are taking Sustiva, it is important to talk honestly to your doctor. The doctor may choose to give you another medicine instead of Sustiva.

Q: *Do I have to take Sustiva every day?*

A: Yes. It is important to take any medicine exactly the way the doctor tells you to. Sustiva will only work if it is taken regularly along with other medicines that are part of the AIDS Cocktail.

Q: *Is Sustiva dangerous to my children?*

A: Yes. All medicine should be stored away from a place that a child can get it. Sustiva like all other medicines could cause serious health problems to anyone who was not told to take it by a doctor. All medicines you take to treat your HIV, AIDS or Hepatitis C infection should be kept in a safe place.

