

# Managing Side Effects of Epclusa® + Ribavirin

(Sofosbuvir/Velpatasvir)

## Fatigue (39%)

- ▶ Try low-impact exercise (walking or low-impact aerobics) as directed by your provider
- ▶ Maintain adequate fluid intake (at least 6 to 8 non-caffeinated 8-ounce glasses/day)
- ▶ Take a short nap during the day
- ▶ Lessen your work schedule if possible
- ▶ Eat well-balanced meals daily

## Nausea (25%)

- ▶ Take ribavirin with food
- ▶ Eat smaller meals
- ▶ Avoid foods/smells that trigger nausea; eat cold foods
- ▶ Eat healthy foods; avoid greasy, spicy, acidic, or sweet foods
- ▶ Try ginger in ginger tea, ginger ale, or gingersnaps
- ▶ Eat some crackers or dry white toast if you feel sick in the morning

## Headache (21%)

- ▶ Maintain adequate fluid intake
- ▶ Try to get plenty of rest
- ▶ Take acetaminophen (Tylenol®)\* as advised by your provider; see instructions on page 2

## Diarrhea (21%)

- ▶ Eat low-fiber foods like Bananas, white Rice, Applesauce, and white Toast (the "BRAT" diet)
- ▶ Avoid foods that are spicy or acidic (like citrus)
- ▶ Avoid dairy products for 2-3 days after diarrhea resolves
- ▶ Maintain adequate fluid intake (at least 6-8 non-caffeinated 8-ounce glasses/day)
- ▶ If recommended by your provider, take loperamide (Imodium®)\* or methylcellulose (Citrucel®)\* or psyllium (Metamucil®)\*

## Insomnia (14%)

- ▶ Go to sleep and wake up at the same time each day
- ▶ Do not read or watch TV in bed
- ▶ Limit daytime naps
- ▶ Try a glass of warm milk (contains tryptophan, a natural sleep agent)
- ▶ If you take ribavirin and feel jittery, take it at 4-5 p.m. instead of before bedtime; still take it with food
- ▶ Limit fluid intake for 2 hours before bedtime to avoid getting up to go to the bathroom in the middle of the night
- ▶ Avoid caffeinated products after 4 p.m.
- ▶ Avoid eating heavy meals close to bedtime
- ▶ Take warm baths, read or listen to music, get a massage
- ▶ Diphenhydramine (Benadryl®)\* or other medications may be recommended by your provider

## Muscle Spasm (11%)

- ▶ Use warm compresses, take a shower or bath to help relieve tension and knots, soak with Epsom salts in warm water for 15 minutes up to 3 times a week
- ▶ Rest for a couple of days if needed, but return to normal activity as soon as you can
- ▶ Move around, walk, do some gentle stretches
- ▶ Get a massage
- ▶ Apply capsaicin cream or aloe vera gel to areas of soreness, then wash your hands
- ▶ If approved by your provider, take 1-2 tablets of acetaminophen (Tylenol®) every 4-6 hours, up to a maximum of 2,000 mg a day; DO NOT TAKE MORE THAN 6 tablets a day of 325 mg OR 4 tablets a day of 500 mg acetaminophen

## Shortness of Breath and Cough (10%)

- ▶ Take note of when and what activities you are doing when you become short of breath, so you can tell your provider
- ▶ Check with your health care provider to make sure your shortness of breath is not caused by a heart or lung problem

Amiodarone (a heart rhythm medicine) should not be taken with Epclusa because it can cause an abnormal slowing of the heart rate called bradycardia.

Over the counter antacids or acid reducing agents can reduce the effectiveness of Epclusa. Talk with your provider if you are planning on taking these medications.

\* Generic versions are usually less expensive than brand-name products. Brand names are provided as examples only, and their inclusion does not indicate an endorsement by the Veterans Health Administration or any other Government agency. Also, if a particular brand name is not mentioned, it does not mean or imply that the product is unsatisfactory.

## Additional Instructions While on Treatment

Close monitoring and follow-up EVERY 2-4 weeks with your provider may be necessary in the beginning of treatment to prevent complications. It is important to take your medications, have laboratory tests, and return for clinic appointments as instructed. Inform your provider if you need to reschedule an appointment.

Notify your provider about all medications including over-the-counter products and dietary/herbal supplements that you are taking. Ask your provider before taking any new medications while on treatment.

Notify your provider of any adverse effects during treatment. Seek immediate medical attention if you develop any serious side effect such as chest pain; shortness of breath; unusual bleeding or bruising; vision changes; dark urine; yellowing eyes or skin; or thoughts of harming yourself or someone else.

## Helpful Telephone Numbers

Telephone Advice Nurse: \_\_\_\_\_

Clinic: \_\_\_\_\_

Provider: \_\_\_\_\_

Epclusa Support Line: 1-844-437-2587

## Other Medications Approved for Your Use if Checked Off by Your Provider

### For Aches/Pains

- Acetaminophen (Tylenol®): Take 1-2 tablets every 4-6 hours if needed, up to maximum of 2,000 mg a day. DO NOT TAKE MORE THAN 6 tablets a day of 325 mg OR 4 tablets a day of 500 mg acetaminophen (Tylenol®).
- Ibuprofen (Advil® or Motrin®) \_\_\_\_\_ mg: Take \_\_\_ tablet every 6 hours with food.
- Naproxen (Aleve®) \_\_\_\_\_ mg: Take \_\_\_ tablet twice a day with food.

### For Sleep

- Diphenhydramine (Benadryl®) \_\_\_\_\_ mg: Take \_\_\_ capsule/tablet at bedtime as needed.
- Trazodone \_\_\_\_\_ mg: Take \_\_\_ tablet at bedtime as needed.